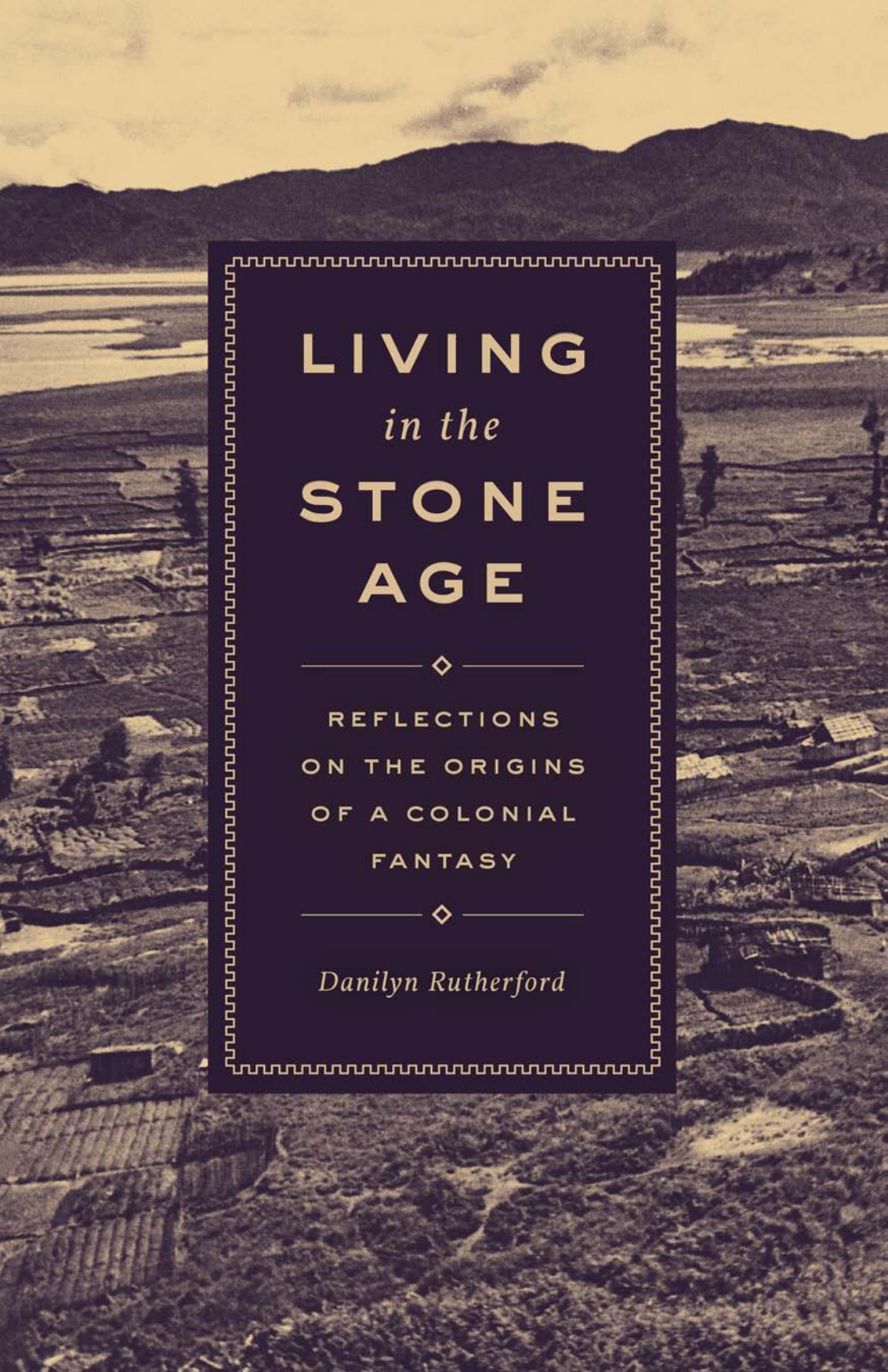

LIVING *in the* STONE AGE

REFLECTIONS ON THE ORIGINS OF A COLONIAL FANTASY

Danilyn Rutherford

Living in the Stone Age

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Reflections on the Origins of a Colonial Fantasy

DANILYN RUTHERFORD

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FIGURE 1
A. Air photo of the mountainous terrain, featuring the Weijland Mountains in Central New Guinea. National Museum of World Cultures. Coll. no. TM-10036227.

B. Air photo of the mountainous terrain, featuring the Weijland Mountains in Central New Guinea. National Museum of World Cultures. Coll. no. TM-10036228.

C. Air photo of the mountainous terrain, featuring Lake Paniai in Central New Guinea. National Museum of World Cultures. Coll. no. TM-10036229.

Preface

This isn't a book I intended to write. In 1989, when I set out to become an anthropologist—without really knowing that that was what I was doing—Stone Age New Guinea was the last thing on my mind. Although I'd been accepted into the doctoral program in anthropology at Cornell, I wasn't all that interested in academia. I thought I would end up working for a foundation or nonprofit dealing with issues related to Indonesia, a place where I had lived and to which I desperately wanted to return. The puzzle that occupied me was a narrow one, or at first so I thought: Who was it that Indonesian bureaucrats and broadcasters were talking about when they spoke on behalf of the *masyarakat*—a word meaning "people" or "society"? Who were they leaving out? The people of Irian Jaya, as the remote, sparsely populated territory then was called, certainly seemed to be left out, as I had learned from the handful of Irianese students I met during two years of teaching English in a city in Central Java. But these students were also excluding themselves. They didn't see themselves as Indonesians; they were Papuans, from ethnic groups belonging to Melanesia, and they were fighting for their own separate state. Their homeland, on the extreme eastern edge of the country, was out of bounds to foreign researchers. It had a reputation as a land filled with Stone Age tribes. One of the few things I knew about

anthropology was that it had moved on from the study of so-called primitive societies. Not only was Irian Jaya an undesirable and unfeasible setting for my research: worse still, it would have been an embarrassing place to work.

Of course, in graduate school things never turn out as expected. During my second year at Cornell, I landed a summer internship with the Ford Foundation in Jakarta. The program officer assigned to me wanted me to write a report about land disputes between local people and the state, and she gave me the option of traveling to Irian Jaya to gather data for a case study. Not thinking anything would come of it, I said yes. The scheme seemed entirely unlikely. The last time the Indonesian government had given a foreign anthropologist permission to do fieldwork in the territory had been in the 1960s. Travel restrictions limited access to the province by foreign journalists and diplomats; even tourists were closely watched. The most recent flag raising in the provincial capital had prompted a brutal crackdown; I knew enough about the situation in Irian Jaya to know it wasn't an easy place to go. But a high official in the National Forestry Department agreed to write a letter to get me past the gatekeepers. The fact that he did this still astonishes me, given the focus of my visit; a separatist movement is, after all, just one big land dispute between local people and the state. After three days on Biak, I was smitten. Encouraged by rumors of a relaxation in the restrictions, I came up with a dissertation project and applied for grants. Two years later, much to my amazement, I got funding and a research permit. In August 1992 I returned to Biak to study nationalism, colonization, and globalization in the long durée—classic topics in Southeast Asian studies in a non–Southeast Asian place.

I wrote my dissertation, which became the basis of *Raiding the Land of the Foreigners*, and in 1998 I began a tenure-track job at the University of Chicago. When I applied for funding for my second project, I wanted to focus on how Papuan nationalists and Dutch colonialists responded to the idea that outsiders were watching them. I didn't mention the Stone Age stereotype,

even though I had seen it in action all around me on Biak: in the quizzical smiles of bureaucrats who wondered why I was interested in people too primitive to have culture; in asides from shopkeepers who spoke of the stupidity of their Papuan customers; in the steely glint in the eyes of a soldier who pulled a pistol on a Papuan policeman who was accompanying me, silencing him, making him shake.

Then a series of things happened. In 2001 I received a grant from the MacArthur program on global security and sustainability. During the same year I was selected to serve as principal investigator for West Papua in an East-West Center Washington project on internal conflicts in Asia. But I never completed the comprehensive study that the project's director was after. As I was beginning my research, it became apparent that my infant daughter had a profound disability. Two years later, in 2003, my husband suddenly died. No longer able to travel for fieldwork, I had to let my ambitions shrink, and my second book ended up being a collection of essays that I strung together around a theme connected to the argument in my first book. I played it safe and focused on people, places, and times I had studied in my research on Biak and among Papuan exiles active in the self-determination movement. Even though my research had ranged much further, I didn't think I had learned enough to write any other kind of book.

I was wrong. For during those same tumultuous years, I was becoming familiar—and indeed somewhat obsessed—with a small group of people, most long dead, who worked some sixty years ago in Dutch New Guinea's central highlands. This book springs from guilty hours I spent reading about them in the Dutch national archives when I really should have been investigating other things. Written between the late 1930s and the mid-1950s, the reports on expeditions in the Wissel Lakes District didn't fit into the history of Papuan nationalism that I was trying to write, and yet I couldn't put them down. I had heard of some of the officials who wrote these documents: Jan Victor de Bruijn had served on Biak, and so had Jan van Eechoud; I had

even interviewed a few of their surviving colleagues. I became captivated by quirky details: a heartfelt turn of phrase, exasperated tones of frustration and embarrassment, strange expressions of love. I also became captivated by that figure I'd been avoiding, who kept making abrupt appearances: the Stone Age Papuan, emerging from the mists of time, staring me stubbornly in the face. Somehow I had to figure out how these two things went together—what it was that connected the romance and the racism. My daughter's diagnosis had kept me close to home, making my work in Chicago with graduate students an increasingly important component of my career. My husband's death had forced me to take nothing for granted. Not only did this puzzle seem to have stakes for my understanding of West Papua—it also had stakes for my understanding of the meaning, value, and ethical implications of what we cultural anthropologists do.

And so this strange little book was born. It's a thought experiment. On the basis of some minor incidents in an obscure corner of the colonized world, I reflect upon some big questions: about the origins of colonial ideology, about the impassioned nature of colonial practices, about the desires and anxieties fueled by our dependence on technology, and about what it takes for cultural anthropologists to make claims about these things.

Even with this impetus, this book would have remained unwritten without a lot of help. I conducted research for this book with the support of a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship for Global Security and Sustainability and as principal investigator of the West Papua Study Group for an East-West Center / Carnegie Foundation project, Dynamics and Management of Internal Conflicts in Asia. A National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship supported me during the initial phases of writing. In the Netherlands I received assistance from the staff of the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies and the National Archives. The Amsterdam Tropical Museum kindly provided images and gave me permission to use them. In Papua and the United States, Benny Giay, Agus Alua, Mientje Rumbiak, Max

Marino, and Eben Kirksey pointed the way as I pursued some of the themes I found in the archives into the present day. Leopold Pospisil spent several hours with me, sharing his memories and extensive knowledge. I couldn't have written this book without Octovianus Mote's friendship, guidance, and support.

At the University of Chicago, Judy Farquhar, Jessica Cattelino, Jennifer Cole, and Kesha Fikes read and commented on early drafts of portions of this work and offered what often turned out to be pivotal advice. At the University of California, Santa Cruz, I belonged to another wonderful writing group, where I benefited from the wisdom of Mayanthi Fernando, Lisa Rofel, Megan Thomas, and Debbie Gould. My students at both institutions indulged me—and taught me a great deal—as I tried out some of the claims presented here in class.

Other colleagues who have supported and inspired me include Anne Allison, the late Ben Anderson, Mark Anderson, Chris Ballard, Andrea Ballestero, Karen Barad, Joshua Barker, Laura Bear, Ted Biggs, Ruy Blanes, Maurice Bloch, Gillian Bogart, Vicky Brennan, Don Brenneis, Suzanne Brenner, Leslie Butt, Melissa Caldwell, Fenella Cannell, Zac Caple, Jim Clifford, Chris Cochran, Jennifer Cole, Rachel Cypher, Giovanni da Col, Aryo Danusiri, Shannon Dawdy, Pieter Drooglever, Tim Duane, Francoise Dussart, Ben Eastman, Shelly Errington, Lars Fehren-Schmitz, Jim Ferguson, Nancy Florida, Kim Fortun, Mike Fortun, Susan Gal, Elaine Gan, Ken George, Kate Goldfarb, Jackie Goldsby, Judith Habicht-Mauche, Joe Hankins, Donna Haraway, Susan Harding, Eva Lotta Hedman, Budi Hernawan, Colin Hoag, Lochlan Jain, Simon Jarvis, Suraya Jetha, Jennifer Johnson-Hanks, Hatib Kadir, Sheldon Kamieniecki, Celina Kapoor, Webb Keane, Stuart Kirsch, Joe Klein, Victor Kumar, Veronika Kusumaryati, Alaina Lemon, David Levin, Marianne Lien, Tanya Luhrmann, Emily Manetta, Purnima Mankekar, Joe Masco, Andrew Mathews, William Mazzarella, Sandra McPherson, Cameron Monroe, Jenny Munro, Megan Moodie, Rudolf Mrazek, Andrea Muehlebach, Yael Navaro-Yashin, Emma Nolan-Thomas, Elayne Oliphant, Stephan Palmie, Juno Parreñas,

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I am grateful to the editors of the following publications, who have given me permission to use portions of the following essays in the book:

Introduction: "Living, as It Were, in the Stone Age." *Indonesia* 95 (April 2013): 1–7.

Chapter 2: "Sympathy, State-Building, and the Experience of Empire." *Cultural Anthropology* 24, no. 1 (2009): 1–32.

Chapter 4: "Demonstrating the Stone Age in Dutch New Guinea." In *From Stone Age to Real Time: Exploring Papuan Temporalities, Mobilities, and Religiosities.* Canberra: Australian National University Press.

Chapter 6: "Kinky Empiricism." *Cultural Anthropology* 27, no. 3 (2012): 465–79.

Last but not least, I must mention three texts and the people who made them available to me: Michel-Rolph Trouillot's "Anthropology and the Savage Slot," which came to me by way of the brilliant syllabus Rolph created for Systems, the University of Chicago's core course for anthropology doctoral students; David Hume's *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, another gift from Rolph's syllabus, although I am also indebted to Kelly Gillespie, who opened my eyes to its perverse pleasures when

she directed me to *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, an early work by Gilles Deleuze; and Jacques Derrida's *The Beast and the Sovereign*, a text David Brent sent my way, but which would have done me no good if I hadn't had the good fortune to study with Jim Siegel at Cornell.

What follows is speculative. It's meant to be that way. Any mistakes are my own.

FIGURE 2. Portrait of H. J. T. Bijlmer, leader of the Mimika Expedition, with an Ekari Papuan. 1936. National Museum of World Cultures. Coll. no. TM 10032847.

Introduction: Living in the Stone Age

"Living, as it were, in the Stone Age." As US president John F. Kennedy saw it in 1961, that was the condition of the Papuans, the inhabitants of the western half of New Guinea, now known by many as West Papua. David Webster (2013) has shown how this assumption about the Papuans guided negotiations over the fate of this last lingering remnant of the Netherlands Indies. At the time Kennedy spoke, the Dutch had just promised, in a fit of idealism and strategy, to grant West Papua independence as a separate nation-state within ten years. Indonesia had long contested Dutch claims to the territory, and now its leaders were seeking Soviet assistance to invade it should the Dutch proceed with their plan. Not wanting the United States to get dragged into the conflict, Kennedy and his advisers intervened to set the stage for Indonesia to absorb the territory. They did this with an apparently clear conscience. The Papuans were "living, as it were, in the Stone Age"—not, that is, in a place like then-embattled West Berlin, home of a "highly civilized" and "highly cultured" population, for whose right to self-determination Kennedy was willing to go to the mat against the Soviets. Papuans were too

scarce—a mere 700,000!—to count. But above all they were too backward. They lived, as it were, in another time.

Papuans are still, as it were, relegated to living in another time. For the most part, politicians and pundits have learned not to call people "primitive," but when it comes to New Guinea little in the language has changed. "As it were": the phrasing is significant. It means "in effect," albeit in a subjunctive and hence hybrid kind of way in which the Papuans' time becomes consequential by virtue of its coexistence with the time of modernity, a time for which their level of civilization and culture proves inadequate. If the Papuans were actually living in the Stone Age, they wouldn't be susceptible to Kennedy's judgment, or the judgment of the relentless series of military officers, bureaucrats, educators, and politicians who have weighed in on the topic of the Papuans' "poor human resources" (Munro 2013; see also Supriatma 2013). "As it were": the phrase marks what literary theorist Homi Bhabha (1994) describes as the ambivalence of colonial discourse. The Papuans are less "not quite, not white," to quote Bhabha, than "not quite, not now," caught in a forever deferred contemporaneity (ibid., 92). Like colonizers elsewhere, those in West Papua have told themselves both that their job is to civilize the locals and that the locals' inherent backwardness will prevent this job from ever being done. "As it were" marks the haunted temporality of present-day Papua: the Stone Age, as it were, is a time out of joint.

This conceit is not as easy to evade as one might expect. Sympathetic outsiders—and committed insiders—have reproduced it: Papuans appear as environmentally friendly stewards of the land, spiritual innocents slaughtered, people with an essential bond to nature. It's easy enough to identify and dismiss what the late anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1991) called "the savage slot" as it functioned in the conjuring of the West by way of its others: noble or barbaric, the savage is what Europeans once were and, in utopian or dystopian renderings, someday might once again be. Harder to avoid is the impulse to reproduce the stereotype in the course of disavowing it. Kennedy was

wrong, one is tempted to tell newcomers to this history if one knows anything about the Papuan delegates whom the Americans refused to meet. The leaders who came to New York during the negotiations included individuals who were fluent in Malay, Dutch, English, and Japanese, as well as their own local Papuan languages. By this measure of cosmopolitanism, some Papuans were more "civilized" and "cultured" than most Americans were then or are now.

I myself have succumbed to the impulse. When I happened upon Biak as a potential research site in the early 1990s, it was the blatant way the islands' inhabitants put the lie to the Stone Age stereotype that most appealed to me. I'd heard versions of this way of talking about the territory while living in Java. Irian Jaya, as Papua was then known, was inhabited by people who ran across snowfields wearing nothing but penis gourds and pig fat. I sniggered at a German tourist whom I met in Biak City who told me he was on his way to find "the colorful people." He meant the ones in grass skirts and war paint; Biaks clearly didn't fit the bill. I was happy to inform anyone who would listen that Biaks under thirty had had literacy rates of as high as 85 percent during the 1930s. I took pains to point out that Biaks boasted doctorates in linguistics, anthropology, and physics among their islands' native daughters and sons. My informants helped feed the beast, waxing eloquently—and frequently—on their island's importance in global history. Yet even as we celebrated Biak's modernity, we subtly reproduced the Stone Age image of New Guinea. The claim that Biaks were not, as it were, living in the Stone Age implied that others still were. These were not just the spectral savages that my informants both conjured and suppressed in flouting Biak skills and sophistication. They were real live people who lived among them: day laborers and civil servants from Wamena or Enarotali, whom some Biaks described as *komi*—a derogatory label meaning roughly "we folks." Elite Biaks drew unflattering comparisons; these people's ancestors were still running around naked when Biak evangelists arrived to open schools.[1] Indonesian officials tended to blame the Papuans for their own

problems: if the Papuans were less "ignorant" (Indonesian: *bodoh*) and "naughty" (Indonesian: *nakal*), there would be no poverty in the province and no reason to govern them with a firm hand. "Living, as it were, in the Stone Age" makes Papuans subject to the highest rates of AIDS and illiteracy in Indonesia and the highest concentrations of Indonesian troops. "Living, as it were, in the Stone Age" makes it difficult for highlanders and coastal people in the self-determination movement to unite. Few colonial conceits have had anything like this staying power. "Stone Age tribes," "Stone Age Tours," "Stone Age Dogs," even "Stone Age Climbing Gyms"—it's hard to imagine any other phrase that has justified so much violence tripping off the tongues of English speakers with so much ease.[2]

The question is why. Why have Papuans found it so difficult to evade this phrase? To respond to this kind of question with a single-word answer like "racism" or "greed" is to leave it unaddressed. Trouillot, who thought about such problems so sharply, made this plain in *Silencing the Past*. "If history is merely the story told by those who won, how did they win in the first place?" Trouillot asks. "And why don't all winners tell the same story?" (1995, 6). When Trouillot speaks of silencing, he is talking about events like the Haitian war of independence, which, due to the racism of contemporary observers, failed to appear in the history books as what it arguably was: the first truly modern revolution.[3] He is talking about how, with the celebration of Columbus Day, Irish and Italian immigrants to the United States brought into existence the "discovery of America"—an event that wasn't actually one when it occurred (ibid., 136–40).

The kind of silencing at work in the persistence of the notion that Papuans are living, as it were, in the Stone Age demands a different kind of analysis, one that tracks an even more complicated dynamic. Whereas Trouillot analyzed silencing as an effect of power, the silencing that has sustained the Stone Age image of West Papua stems from something quite different. Present-day Papua is temporally out of joint, but not by virtue of the benighted status of its inhabitants. Those who "won" in West

Papua created this image of its inhabitants, but not in a straightforward way. Representations of Papuan backwardness are diagnostic of the staying power of a colonial paradox. To understand this paradox and the suffering it has caused, we have to do more than simply dismiss colonial ideology. We have to tell the story of colonialism somewhat differently than we usually do: as a tale that begins with weakness, not strength. We have to tell it in a fashion attuned to the historical production of a colonial fantasy and the historical work this fantasy continues to do (see Rutherford 2009, 2012a). This is what I attempt to do in this book.

The Stone Age label was born in the early nineteenth century in a Danish museum whose curator, Christian Jürgensen Thomsen, came up with a way of sorting artifacts found at different depths in ancient ruins. Thomsen put weapons and utensils made of different substances into rooms representing three stages of human development: the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, and the Iron Age.[4] Some decades later Sir John Lubbock (1865), in his classic *Pre-historic Times*, was the first to argue that one could study the customs of the "non-metallic savages" of his day in order to understand Europe's own Stone Age past. In the nineteenth century the division of human history into ages was not new: the Greek poet Hesiod's five ages of man included golden, silver, bronze, heroic, and iron.[5] What was new was the argument that there is a connection between technology and the march of civilization and the recruitment of non-Western people to prove the point.

Highlands Papuans arrived too late in the colonial game to serve as grist for Lubbock's mill.[6] In western New Guinea, the coastal people European travelers and missionaries first encountered wielded machetes. The global trade in spices had brought metal to the nearby Moluccas, and seafaring smiths and traders from New Guinea's northern coastline and islands, including Biak, were plying a brisk local trade in metal goods. It wasn't until the early twentieth century that expeditions into the interior refueled the Stone Age fantasy: confronted with a new crop of "non-metallic savages," the farther up the mountains Dutch of-

ficials and explorers ventured, the further back they felt they were going in time.[7] This impression gained its grip in intimate encounters involving people whose technologies—and whose sense of connection to useful things—varied in ways that were open to an evolutionary reading. Still, the writings of armchair anthropologists like Lubbock don't tell the whole story. In the case of western New Guinea, as least, colonial ideology was symptomatic of vulnerability, insecurity, even shame.

Or so it seems from the records of colonial expeditions that form the archive for this book. These trips took place in a part of the central highlands now known as Paniai, which the Dutch named the Wissel Lakes after the pilot who, in 1936, "discovered" the string of lakes that is the most notable feature of the populous valleys that make up this landscape (see Rutherford 2009, 2012a). The authors of journals, reports, academic articles, and popular-press books describe with unguarded enthusiasm their encounters with people living, as it were, in the Stone Age: time travel is clearly a rush.[8] But they also describe aspects of these journeys that were considerably more peculiar: they themselves were often at the mercy of more competent locals, and these locals treated them as intimate, and often pitiable, friends.

Consider the following account of touring the Wissel Lakes, penned by a doctor sent to the post at Enarotali after it reopened following World War II:

> One can walk through the entire settlement [DR: at Enarotali] in ten minutes, dry-footed. But one had better not venture a meter beyond it. There one comes directly into contact with the highland swamps. Papuan paths cross the entire region. But they were built by people who walk barefoot and as a result aren't continually troubled by wet feet. They prefer to jump across a big pit to building a bridge over it. If they ever have to get across a broad stream, then it's a thin pole, which they walk across without losing their balance. On these paths, whites end up drenched in mud up to their hips, and often their crowns, while the Papuans accompanying them are only muddy up to their ankles and at most their knees. And even then they act as if it is a tragedy as terrible as ruining their best clothes. (Boelen 1955, 19–20)

The doctor writes with a lightheartedness that reflected the firmer hold the Dutch had over the Wissel Lakes after the war, when seaplanes from Biak were beginning to supply the post at Enarotali regularly and punitive campaigns were beginning to convince its more rebellious inhabitants of the government's might. Media depictions of today's West Papua often feature the same kind of jarring scene: if shows like *Survivor* and *Fear Factor* are any indication, it's entertaining to watch wealthy urbanites get covered with mud. Less entertaining, at least for the sufferer, were the trials and tribulations of Jan van Eechoud, a police commissioner who was charged with opening the post at Enarotali before the war (see Rutherford 2009). With little reason to think the natives had any respect for—or fear of—his authority, van Eechoud understandably worried about looking silly. And if he lost his way on these Papuan paths, he risked starvation. Van Eechoud couldn't count on the locals' respect for his firearms. He couldn't count on his radio to function or the supply plane he'd been promised to arrive. He was frustrated by the logistical challenges involved in simply reaching Enarotali—let alone setting up a functioning government. He was all too often at the mercy of the Papuans, who were generally far more effective at getting things done.

On the one hand, vulnerability. On the other hand, intimacy. The two hands were joined in this colonial scene. Intimacy with particular Papuans—the chiefs and adventurers who guided the Dutch through these lands—proved key to the colonizers' survival. Van Eechoud's successor, the district's first chief officer, Jan Victor de Bruijn, slips on a path; the wife of his "best friend," Soelakigi, whom we will get to know well, pulls him to his feet and gently wipes the mud off his cheek (ibid.). Such scenes fed the dream of grateful, if primitive, natives that drew Dutch officials like van Eechoud and de Bruijn to western New Guinea in the 1930s and made them loath to leave after World War II, when Indonesian revolutionaries on Java and other western Indonesian islands demanded their own nation-state.[9] The Dutch who ventured into the Wissel Lakes were predisposed to view

New Guinea as a Stone Age land. As de Bruijn explained to his biographer, others' accounts of the Stone Age were what attracted him to the post (Rhys 1947, 115). Once on the ground, they found this conceit comforting. It made their vulnerability to and intimacy with the Papuans bearable. By imagining the Papuans as living, as it were, in the Stone Age, the authors I consider were able to avoid pondering the fact that they themselves were relatively impotent in this land.

Not only did these experiences fuel the fantasy that the officials were traveling in the Stone Age; they fueled these officers' commitment to what they saw as the Papuans' uplift. It's no accident that de Bruijn and van Eechoud went on to become some of the most vocal proponents of the establishment of a self-standing Dutch colony in New Guinea when the Netherlands lost the rest of the former Indies following World War II. Both contributed to the Allied cause during the war, when Dutch New Guinea was under the command of the Japanese army. Japanese troops quickly took control of settlements on the territory's northern coast, but they made slow progress moving into the interior. Van Eechoud was evacuated in August 1942 but returned in September 1943, first as part of the Special Dutch Photo Mission, then to head up Operation Bulldozer, which undertook intelligence operations in the hinterlands of Hollandia, the territory's administrative capital (Derix 1987, 124–25). De Bruijn, for his part, refused to leave his post in Enarotali. He remained at large in the district until July 1944, when the Japanese caught wind of his presence and Allied commanders arranged for him to be airlifted out (see Rhys 1947; Derix 1987, 122).

When the Allies retook New Guinea, long before the Japanese had relaxed their hold on Sumatra and Java, de Bruijn and van Eechoud were among the first to return to colonial service. Van Eechoud was based on Biak as head of the civilian administration when Dutch New Guinea was still in the hands of the Allies. In 1944 he established a police training school and a school for civil servants whose graduates filled the ranks of the Papuan political elite. De Bruijn also served on Biak, in his case as the district

officer (known in Dutch by a word meaning "controller") before working his way up the ranks to become the colony's director of native affairs. They both urged the Dutch government to stand fast against Indonesian pressure to include New Guinea in the transfer of sovereignty that confirmed Indonesia's independence. They both publicly defended the Netherlands' mission in New Guinea during the 1950s, when the United Nations got involved. When the Netherlands finally gave in to American pressure and agreed to relinquish the colony, de Bruijn and van Eechoud were among the most disappointed. They no doubt would have felt vindicated, if sad, if they had lived to witness the disastrous effects of Indonesian rule on the Papuans. And yet their hands were not clean when it comes to this outcome. The same fantasy that justified continued Dutch colonization has perpetuated the suffering the territory's inhabitants have endured.

This, in a nutshell, is my tale. As I tell it, I will ponder the implications of this brief episode in the history of Western imperialism: for our understanding of West Papua's history; for our analysis of the relationship between colonial practice and colonial ideology; and for our sense of the mission of anthropology at a moment when we are compelled to make a case for the empirical value of what we do. But before turning to the Wissel Lakes, we should consider how these Dutch officials got there in the first place—and how their mission related to dreams and fears rooted in a long colonial past.

Getting to the Wissel Lakes

At the time van Eechoud, de Bruijn, and their colleagues arrived in the Wissel Lakes, vulnerability, insecurity, and, yes, even shame had long been components of Dutch colonial practice in New Guinea. The Indies government took possession of the western half of New Guinea in 1828 on the basis of the north Moluccan sultan of Tidore's somewhat dubious claims to the territory. (Later in the century, on the eastern side, Britain and Germany founded colonies, which Australia oversaw following

FIGURE 3. Fields near Enarotali adjacent to Lake Paniai. 1939. National Museum of World Cultures. Coll. no. TM-1000991l.

World War I as the Territory of Papua and the Mandate Territory of New Guinea.)[10] The Dutch were loath to devote much effort to governing this vast and seemingly unprofitable land. Instead they pursued what Rogier Smeele (1988) has called a "policy of display." The sultan of Tidore ostensibly ruled New Guinea on behalf of the Dutch under the Indies system of governance. Traveling with the Tidoran war fleet, European officers put up signs and distributed flags and uniforms in the hopes that the Papuans would inform foreign captains that they were trespassing on Dutch terrain. This strategy gave rise to some embarrassing moments, gleefully recounted by foreigner observers (see Rutherford 2012b). Many of the Papuans encountered during such

expeditions had never even heard of Tidore. Those who had had long tended to turn their encounters with the sultan and his minions toward their own particular ends. As Dutch officials toured New Guinea's coastline during the nineteenth century, they experienced firsthand the flimsiness of this version of indirect rule.

This is not to say that my protagonists and their predecessors operated in the same world. In New Guinea, as throughout the Indies, the twentieth century ushered in a period of what Dutch historians have called "internal imperialism": an expansion of governance within given boundaries designed to suit the dictates of the modern state's demand for territorial control (see Locher-Scholten 1994; Rutherford 2003; van Goor 1986; Vlasblom 2004).[11] Entailing the pacification of populations already claimed on paper, an intensified process of state building was the order of the day. In 1898, after the colonial steam line opened a route along the northern coast of Dutch New Guinea, the government founded permanent posts at Fak-Fak and at Manokwari, close to the site where Protestant missionaries had been working since 1855. In 1902 British complaints about cross-border raiding forced the Dutch finally to establish a post on the southern coast at Merauke and to launch punitive expeditions into the interior. Soon afterward the Indies government set aside the pretense of Tidoran sovereignty and redrew administrative boundaries in the south, then throughout the territory. During the 1930s, multinational corporations from the Netherlands, the United States, and Japan turned their attention to Dutch New Guinea, and the search for oil and minerals began.

Along with these developments, the twentieth century saw changes in the personnel who served in New Guinea. A handful of missionaries and traders had been the only Europeans residing in the territory for much of the nineteenth century. Low-ranking European and native civil servants manned the first permanent government posts. But individuals closer to the center of power increasingly took interest in New Guinea. J. A. Kroesen, the Dutch assistant resident who took charge of the new administrative unit of South New Guinea in 1902, reported directly to the

Indies governor general; his successors reported to the resident in the southern Moluccan city of Ambon (Vlasblom 2004, 77). (The north remained within the jurisdiction of the north Moluccan resident of Ternate, a nod to the premise that Tidore was still in charge of this part of the island.) Hendrikus Colijn, who was Governor General J. B. van Heutzch's aide-de-camp and eventually became prime minister of the Netherlands, took these changes even further (see Overweel 1998, 456). In 1906 Colijn called on Dutch leaders to abandon the treaty with Tidore entirely and increase their investment in New Guinea, funded in part by turning the tribute paid to the sultan into taxes paid to the Dutch (ibid., 458).

Colijn set the tone for the new crop of New Guinea enthusiasts who followed. There was Alexander F. R. Wollaston, a naturalist from the British Ornithological Society who "discovered" the so-called Tapiro pygmies (Overweel 1998, 79, 93; Wollaston 1912). There were priests like Pastor Herman Tillemans, MSC, an intrepid explorer of the interior, and his colleagues who established a foothold for Catholicism on the southern coasts (Vlasblom 2004, 93–94). There were doctors and amateur anthropologists like Dr. H. J. T. Bijlmer, who wrote a lively book on his anthropometric research in the highlands (Vlasblom 2004; Bijlmer 1938). There were right-wing colonials like A. Th. Schalk, chair of the Indo European Union branch in Banyuwangi, a small Javanese city, and L. H. W. van Sandick, a former governor and member of the ultranationalist Patriot's Club, both of whom saw New Guinea as the perfect setting for the establishment of agricultural colonies for impoverished Europeans, including members of the mixed-race community (Rutherford 2012b). There were geologists, pilots, and mountaineers.

This book's protagonists belonged to a cohort of ambitious young colonial officials who also decided New Guinea was the place to be. Jan Victor de Bruijn was the mixed-race son of a wealthy planter on Java, who sent him to the Netherlands for his education. He earned a doctorate in Javanese archaeology at Leiden University while waiting for an assignment in New

Guinea (Rhys 1947). Jan van Eechoud was born in 1904 into a humble family in Horst, in the Dutch province of Limburg (Vlasblom 2004, 96; Derix 1987). The eldest of eight children, in 1929 he traveled to the Indies, where he enjoyed a brief but ultimately unsuccessful career as an importer in Palembang, Sumatra, and an even shorter stint as a game hunter for a firm specializing in the exotic animal trade. He found his calling when he entered the police academy in Sukabumi, West Java, with some other young men who were New Guinea bound. Van Eechoud was thirty-two when he moved to Manokwari in 1936 as the Division of North New Guinea's newly appointed police commissioner. His first task was to find a route from the northern coast into the highlands. De Bruijn was twenty-six when arrived in the Indies in 1937. In January 1939 he arrived in the Wissel Lakes to finally take up the job as district officer/controller (Vlasblom 2004, 99; see also Rhys 1947). Travel wasn't easy. Van Eechoud and de Bruijn took planes, trains, ships, motorboats, canoes, and grueling hikes to get where they needed to be.

For young men like these, New Guinea seemed to offer expanded opportunities for adventure. In addition to recommending administrative changes, Colijn had called for an extended period of exploration. Military detachments based in Fak-Fak, Manokwari, and Merauke were to lead the charge (see Overweel 1998, 459). In South New Guinea the troops were tasked with mapping major rivers, finding routes between watersheds, and inventorying the various tribes and estimating their population (Vlasblom 2004, 78). They were also ordered to provide cover for private parties intent on ascending New Guinea's snow-capped peaks, the highest of which rose over sixteen thousand feet into the equatorial air (see Ploeg 1995; Overweel 1998, 465; Ballard, Vink, and Ploeg 2002).

The military expeditions required a significant investment from Batavia—but not nearly as significant as what would have been required to directly govern the territory. The fact that there are still no roads running between the north and south coasts of West Papua suggests what these officials were up against. There

were the swampy coastlines, where travelers were beset with malaria-ridden mosquitoes and hostile tribes. If the lowlands were bad, the foothills weren't much better. In many places one could reach the interior only by river. Rain-swollen and muddy at their mouths, the rivers grew colder, faster, and more treacherous as one climbed upstream. The climb ended with rapids, then waterfalls, deep in canyons from which there was no apparent way out. As for the land routes, photographs tell the story: the rainforests were thick, unbroken, and well nigh impenetrable. Van Eechoud named his memoir *With Machete and Compass* for a reason: the activities most critical to his success were cutting underbrush and avoiding getting lost. The sounds: bird song, insects, frogs, thunder, the distant drone of a plane. The smells: mud, grass, rain, wildflowers, wood smoke, mildew, roasting tubers, canvas, spoiled rice. If one made it to the cold, high mountain valleys, still to come were those snow-capped peaks, which glittered for passing ships in those brief moments when the entire landscape wasn't draped in fog.

Despite the challenges, all this exploring was necessary; it provided the colonial government with a way of looking busy in case a foreign power challenged its claims. Expeditions weren't a sideline to colonial practice; those involved understood them as the main event. When the resident of Ambon lent his troops to visiting naturalists or asked oil company employees to help with aerial mapping, he was advancing the cause of colonial state building. When Frits Julius Wissel flew over the lakes, he was helping Hendrik Colijn's son Anton find a route to the summit of the Carstensz Massif, near what would much later become the site of the Freeport mine (see Vlasblom 2004, 92).

The task that was supposed to take two years ended up taking eight. At the outset of World War I, all of the major geographical features in the lowlands had found a place on Dutch maps. But these maps had a white splotch in the middle spanning the spine of the island: the central highlands remained to be filled in. By this point, Dutch relations with the lowlands tribes had soured. During the pacification campaign that led up to the creation

of the post at Merauke, Marind warriors had taken to luring soldiers and officials into the tall grass around the settlement so they could shoot them with arrows and take their heads. The incoming assistant resident held entire villages responsible. Men caught with war trophies were arrested or deported, and in some instances shot on the spot. Women and children watched as their homes burned to the ground. By the 1930s, smallpox, venereal disease, and the flu pandemic of 1918 had decimated the population. Dying babies were among the first Marind baptized by Catholic missionaries, who, upon their arrival in 1915, tried to move uninfected Marind families into model villages where they made them give up their customs, attend school, and wear Western clothes (ibid., 84). Further to the west, in Oeta, the homeland of yet another "savage" tribe, the period was much the same. There was no love lost between the Dutch and these lowland groups; it's not hard to imagine why.

But in the white splotch, things would be different. High above the malarial lowlands, in the cool, fertile valleys of the highlands, the Dutch dreamed of finding a blank slate. And so our story begins.

Plan of the Book

The Dutch were not the only actors in the episodes I describe. The highland Papuans described in the following pages went by a variety of names: today's Me then were known as either Kapauku or Ekari and made up the largest share of the Wissel Lakes population; today's Moni were sometimes called Djonggana u and were a small but influential minority; there were also smaller numbers of Oehoendoeni and Dani, including women from other places who had married local men. We'll also come across some unidentified "wild Papuans" who make a cameo appearance in van Eechoud's memoir. And we'll get to know other Indies natives: Sitanala, the low-ranking Ambonese civil servant who was de Bruijn's right-hand man (Vlasblom 2004, 98); Wuwung, the Menadonese police officer who assisted van Eechoud

on his first expedition; and an untold number of Dayak paddlers, Javanese convicts, and Papuan bearers from other areas, including some from the Bird's Head Peninsula and others from the southern coast.

With very few exceptions, the characters featured in the following chapters are male. The colonial civil service was male, and there was no provision for spouses in the early stages of state building in Dutch New Guinea. The Papuan leaders awaiting Dutch officials in the highlands were also predominantly male. Both on the trail and in the villages, homosocial bonding was the order of the day. This isn't to say there wasn't a role for women in this drama. Papuan women appeared in local audiences as witnesses to men's missteps and feats of derring-do. They also appeared as tokens of men's affection for one another. De Bruijn took it as a sign of intimacy when Soalekigi told him that "no one would object" if de Bruijn implemented a local custom by shooting one of Soalekigi's widows when the chief died (de Bruijn 1941, 61). In return, the Dutch official left Soalekigi speechless with pleasure when he joked about marrying one of his kin (de Bruijn 1939b, 13).[12] Although I don't dwell on this aspect of the situation, Dutch New Guinea was clearly one of those zones of colonial contact where what anthropologist Ann Stoler calls the "education of desire" was key to the production of bourgeois selves (Stoler 1995). Not only was Dutch sovereignty vulnerable in highlands New Guinea, but so was Dutch manhood; the Stone Age was a place where both could be affirmed. The promotional materials produced by the colonization societies played on this dynamic. New Guinea was described as a "virgin land" where mixed-race paupers would be reborn as real men (see Rutherford 1998).

This book falls into four sections and focuses on a period extending from 1936 to 1955. It begins around the time the resident of Ambon signed the order to establish a new district in the central highlands; it ends after Indonesian independence, when the Dutch redoubled their efforts in New Guinea and something like an effective administration took root. Although the bulk of

my research was concentrated on the Wissel Lakes district, I also take brief forays into adjacent areas, which were being explored at roughly the same time.

Throughout the book I focus on the sentiments of Dutch officials. But I also hint at the reasons why some Papuans collaborated in the colonial mission, which, I suggest, had as much to do with their fascination with uncertain sites of potency as their commitment to colonial hierarchies or to the rationality of colonial law. Other anthropologists have gone much further than I do here in exploring how Papuan groups experienced their initial interactions with Europeans (Clark 2011; Schieffelin and Crittendon 1991; Stasch 2014a, 2014b, 2015, 2016; Giay 1995, 1999; Ploeg 2007; see also Ploeg 1995; Faier and Rofel 2014). Their findings have varied: for some Papuans these interactions mark a watershed in local history; others have forgotten them entirely, while everything that came after—pacification, missionization, wage labor—stands out. At the end of Edward L. Schieffelin and Robert Crittendon's fascinating study of an expedition in the southern highlands of Australian Papua, they observe that the patrol "does not seem *by itself* to have had much of an impact on the world view of most of the Papuans it encountered" (1991, 290). I can only guess at how the episodes described in the following chapters affected the outlook of the Papuans whom van Eechoud, de Bruijn, and their colleagues met along the way. But one thing is clear: "first contact" was a very big deal for these officials. We must begin with their reactions to understand how these early encounters led to the transformation of Papuan worlds.

Part 1 ("Sympathy and Its Discontents: A Colonial Encounter") provides an overview of the Dutch approach to state building in the Wissel Lakes. In the Wissel Lakes, as in the larger colony of which it was part, Dutch officials described colonialism as a form of hospitality in which the natives welcomed the Dutch into their homelands and the Dutch welcomed them into the civilized world. In chapter 1 ("Hospitality in the Highlands"), rather than dismissing this conceit as simply self-serving ideology (which it clearly was), I delve more deeply into the concept

of hospitality, which I see as capturing the instability of colonial hierarchies. For help I turn to Jacques Derrida's analysis of the D. H. Lawrence poem "Snake," which shows how sovereignty and vulnerability are intrinsically connected, especially in surprising scenes of visitation, like the well where the poem's narrator happens upon the serpent or the empty gardens and slippery pathways where travelers and Papuans met. Derrida shows how assertions of sovereignty turn on the struggle over who is guest and who is host in the poem's portrait of a sudden encounter with a strange and dangerous other. Reports by de Bruijn and others about their travels in the highlands point to the same kind of struggle.

Having sketched out the scene of hospitality Dutch officials entered when they came to the Wissel Lakes, in chapter 2 ("Sympathetic State Building") I consider the strategy they pursued to reach their goals. The aim of their mission in the highlands was, as the resident of Ambon put it, to make the Papuans "predictable according to our concepts." To do so, officials like van Eechoud and de Bruijn had to learn to see and feel as they imagined the Papuans did: that is, they had to "sympathize" in the sense described by the eighteenth-century philosopher David Hume, whose understanding of the relationship between sympathy and governance had a good deal in common with theirs. Hume viewed sympathy, which is not be confused with empathy, as critical to people's ability to know the world and act in it. Like inference, the other cognitive operation on which Hume's philosophy turned, it is inherently fictive: no one can truly identify a cause, just as no one can truly inhabit another's skin. Sympathy provided Dutch officials with a way of domesticating the unnerving forms of difference they encountered. But this domestication was never complete. In forcing them to imagine perspectives they could never fully grasp, the use of sympathy confronted these officials with the possibility that the Papuans might be seeing them in mysterious and potentially disturbing ways.

In part 2 ("Vulnerability and Fantasies of Mastery"), I turn to another striking component of state building in the highlands:

the degree to which it mobilized dreams of mastery and fears of vulnerability associated with people's dependence on useful things. In chapter 3 ("Technological Passions"), I go back in time to Jan van Eechoud's first expedition and the way he describes it in his memoir as an experience that enabled him to become an effective component of what I will call "the trekking machine": the assemblage of men and materiel that made it possible for colonial officials to imagine they were capable of taking control of New Guinea. I focus on the feelings technologies inspire, and the feelings that fuel them, to show how van Eechoud trained his body for his new role in the course of setting out to train the Stone Age Papuans for their incorporation into the colonial state. In a fashion parallel to that illuminated in part 2, the passions associated with technology turn out to be ineradicable elements of this colonial situation. At the same time, the sentiments born of this situation serve as technologies in their own right.

Chapter 4 ("Technological Performances") turns from the vulnerability officials felt in the face of technology to their efforts to reassert mastery. Here I look at technology demonstrations, which were a critical element of initial attempts to establish contact with new native groups on both sides of New Guinea and in the rest of the colonial world. I show how the shooting of firearms, the playing of gramophones, and other spectacles functioned as what the analytic philosopher John Austin has called "speech acts." They briefly created the impression that particular colonial officials were responsible for their devices' agency and hence possessed a sovereignty consisting of their supreme and absolute power over their own acts. This chapter begins with the initial forays into the Wissel Lake and ends in the 1950s, when Papuans were themselves laying claim to technology's power.

Throughout the book I keep coming back to the unnerving parallels between colonial practice and ethnographic method. Part 3 ("Lessons for a New Anthropology") takes us more deeply into the broader implications of this aspect of my analysis, which stems in part from my engagement with the work of David Hume. I am not the only cultural anthropologist in recent years

who has found Hume's formulations surprisingly relevant (see Johnson-Hanks 2005; Ochoa 2007; Lemon 2009; Lempert 2012; Fennell 2015). Hume's writings encourage us to raise questions set aside in the theoretical traditions to which the mainstream of our subfield has been heir. Whereas Durkheim, like Kant, accepted people's ability to share perspectives and passions as given, Hume scrutinized this key ingredient of sociality as a phenomenon to be (however fancifully) explained. Although the literatures on "theory of mind" (Luhrmann et al. 2011), "stance" (Kockelman 2004), and "recognition" (Keane 1997) do some of the same work, Hume's account of sympathy is particularly useful in stressing the political and practical purposes of this passion and the uncertain nature of the knowledge on which it relies. Whereas de Bruijn and van Eechoud used sympathy in an attempt to assert authority, ethnographers have often used sympathy in an effort to relinquish it. Neither mission is as straightforward as its proponents might have dreamed. Catherine Fennell (2015) has explored the limits of well-meaning interventions that take the cultivation of sympathy as a goal rather than targeting the historical conditions that create differences in power. The anthropology of suffering, which showcases moments of fellow feeling, comes in for close scrutiny in Fennell's discussion. My emphasis in these final chapters is different. I take aim at the tacit ways sympathy functions in our methods and imbues them with ethical and epistemological force.

In chapter 5 ("Sympathy and the Savage Slot") I leave behind van Eechoud, de Bruijn, and their friends and colleagues and fast-forward to the late 1950s when the social anthropologist Leopold Pospisil conducted fieldwork in the Wissel Lakes. Pospisil's voluminous and engaging depictions of his work among the Kapauku Papuans offers evidence of how one anthropologist deployed sympathy as a tool. They also offer glimpses of how the Kapauku might have experienced Pospisil's fieldwork. I end with some impressions from a 2003 field visit to Enarotali, where I met people who have found creative ways to talk back to the fantasy that would have them chained to a Stone Age past.

The final chapter, chapter 6 ("The Ethics of Kinky Empiricism"), is part manifesto, part celebration. The first part of the chapter consists of a close reading of James Clifford and George Marcus's seminal collection *Writing Culture*. I suggest that rather than leading anthropologists away from empirical questions, as the book's critics have suggested, the contributors taught us to be empirical in new and more rigorous ways. This new version of empiricism is "kinky" in the sense that it is both perverse and reflexive: it reveals the limits of mainstream social-scientific approaches by reflecting back on the conditions under which researchers make claims. In the next section I use Hume's epistemology as a framework for identifying elements of the best work in this tradition. I end by considering the relationship between the ethical and the empirical in colonialism and anthropology. Returning to Dutch New Guinea, I analyze a passage from de Bruijn's biography that describes how the official used photography to overcome the sympathy he felt for a man condemned to death. I end with a discussion of Philippe Bourgois and Schonberg's brilliant ethnography *Righteous Dopefiend*, which uses photography in the service of a study that brings together the ethical and the empirical in promising new ways.

This book's lessons for anthropology are not just cautionary; they are also affirming. I show how the experiences of particular officials led them to promote a particular vision of New Guinea. In doing so, I offer a demonstration of how anthropologists can make empirical claims about the origins of cultural concepts—and illuminate the ways in which cultural concepts shape the empirical world. The book moves from a particular colonial past to a possible disciplinary future. But it never forgets the puzzle with which it began. How did the Papuans get trapped in the Stone Age? Is there any way out?

Into Today

Although this book draws on archival material, it is not about the past. Today's Papuans are still dealing with the consequences of

the history recounted here.[13] Dani leaders have protested against their group's portrayal in Jared Diamond's 2012 book *The World until Yesterday*, which reads like a remake of *Pre-historic Times*. Diamond uses the Dani and other of the world's remaining "traditional societies" as proxy for human prehistory and a source of wisdom for modern readers. In chapters comparing approaches to dispute resolution, warfare, aging, and responses to danger, Diamond introduces modern readers to traditional virtues worth reviving and traditional vices that are better left behind.[14] In the fashion so well described by Trouillot, Diamond uses a dichotomy to domesticate diversity. In one breath he writes of how much traditional societies vary in rates of homicide, say, or death tolls in wars. In another he averages the numbers and makes sweeping statements about the frequency of killings to support his claim that violence was far more pervasive in the "world until yesterday" than it is in societies with modern states (2012, 272).

Diamond defends his argument in advance by setting up straw men: naysayers who romanticize traditional societies. But when Papuan critics take him to task for using violence in the Baliem to exemplify traditional warfare, they aren't defending the image of the noble savage. They are insisting on the particularities of the history that put their people in the predicament they are in today. "I am very upset with this man [Jared Diamond]," writes Benny Wenda, an activist and intellectual from the Lani tribe. "He is not writing about what the Indonesian military is doing—that is the real violence that is happening in West Papua."[15] There is no way of knowing from Diamond's description that the episodes he recounts occurred not long before Indonesian fighter planes began strafing Dani villages. Diamond writes extensively about West Papuan people without ever mentioning the territory's sordid colonial past. One of the first initiatives launched by the Indonesian government in Irian Jaya was to take the Dani out of their penis sheaths and put them in pants (Rutherford 1998, 558). The Indonesian foreign minister reportedly described the 1970 campaign as an attempt "to get [the Papuans] down from the trees even if we have to pull them down."[16] The conceit that

structures Diamond's book is far from innocent in this history. It is far from innocent in the predicaments facing West Papuan people today.

"Living, as it were, in the Stone Age," to recall John F. Kennedy's 1961 assessment, reflects the vicissitudes of Dutch colonialism in New Guinea. The resources at the disposal of those attempting to govern Papua now are certainly more formidable than those available to their predecessors. The aversion the Dutch felt for Indonesians lives on among many of today's Papuans, and the New Order's heavy-handed policies and sheer rapaciousness won few friends. Yet present-day efforts to bring Papua under control have arguably spawned intimacies and vulnerabilities of their own. I wonder what we would learn if we approached today's histories in the making in something like the spirit I am bringing to this study. What would it mean to tell the story of Indonesian colonialism as a tale of weakness, not only strength? The chapters that follow won't answer this question, but they may provide some hints. To get started, let's return to that brief moment in the 1930s when the Dutch saw themselves as guests in a Stone Age land.

FIGURE 4. District Officer Vic de Bruyn (alias Jungle Pimpernel), with Ekari Papuans in the Wissel Lakes. 1948. National Museum of World Cultures. Coll. no. TM-60039219.

part 1

Sympathy and Its Discontents: A Colonial Encounter

1

Hospitality in the Highlands

Colonialism in the Netherlands Indies was a matter of maps and censuses, plantations and planning documents, the control of land and labor, and the pursuit of national pride. But it was also a matter of minor meetings—awkward encounters on lonely beaches and sleepy villages, stumbled into by disruptive strangers who claimed control over their surroundings but were never quite at home. Strangers who were both guests, who had to stay in the good graces of the people whose lives they were disrupting, and hosts, who were intent on welcoming these very people into a new and supposedly better world. The Indies' furthest reaches were no exception. To understand why the Dutch remained longer in New Guinea than in any other part of the colony, we need the big picture provided by the growing literature on colony policy and practice in the territory (Penders 2002; Saltford 2003; Vlasblom 2004; Drooglever 2009). But we also need small snapshots of the on-the-ground interactions from which this colonial order was made. These interactions happened in zones of contact that were at the same time zones of hospitality: spaces where the colonized and the colonizers both welcomed and kept each other at bay.

The late French philosopher Jacques Derrida had something to say about how sovereignty and hospitality might come to-

gether in such spaces. Not long before his death, Derrida delivered a lecture on D. H. Lawrence's 1923 poem "Snake" (see Derrida 2009, 239–49). The poem's narrator goes to his water trough "on a hot, hot day"—"the day in Sicilian July, with Etna smoking." There he finds a snake, "earth-brown, earth-golden"—and poisonous—which has crawled from a crack in the wall and is drinking at the trough. The narrator describes the snake as "someone" who has "come like a guest in quiet"; yet by implication, the snake is also like a host. The man stands waiting, "like a second comer," which makes the snake the "first comer" who has turned this human space into his own.

The narrator is suspended between fear and fascination. "The voices" of his "human education" tell him to kill the creature. "If you were a man, / You would take a stick and break him now, and finish him off" (Lawrence in Derrida 2009, 247). But something keeps him from taking action: perhaps "cowardice," perhaps "perversity," perhaps "humility to feel so honored" "that he should seek my hospitality, / From out the dark door of the secret earth." But when the snake turns to leave, the spell is broken. "A sort of horror, a sort of protest against his withdrawing into that horrid black hole, . . . / Overcame me now his back was turned." The man puts down his pitcher and throws a log at the snake; he doesn't hit it, but "suddenly that part of him that was left behind convulsed in undignified haste, / Writhed like lightning, and was gone."

> And so I missed my chance with one of the lords
> Of life.

Note that it is at the moment when the snake is most vulnerable that the question of sovereignty arises. A killable pest becomes an unexpected guest and, finally, an "uncrowned king," who but for the man's "pettiness" might have welcomed him into an alternative realm.

In his earlier writings on hospitality, Derrida (2000; 2001) locates his reflections in a contemporary context: a Europe that is becoming increasingly "inhospitable," increasingly obsessed

with expunging the alterity within (see also Shryock 2008 and 2009). As Derrida points out, sovereignty is built into conventional understandings of hospitality. To be a host, one must have a claim to property ownership and the ability to control those one allows through one's gates. This tension finds expression in the figure of the immigrant as a potential terrorist, like a poisonous snake, whom the "voices" of "human education" warn us against welcoming in. As anyone who voted for Brexit—or Donald Trump—can tell you, a basic component of national sovereignty is the right to close borders: sovereignty, like hospitality, depends on the possibility of keeping others out.

Derrida's meditation on "Snake" complicates this picture: the dangerous guest is not simply an intruder; "he" is also a potential interlocutor, a "someone" with the ability to recognize the narrator's prerogative, or not. Sovereignty is sovereignty only to the extent it demands recognition. Those targeted as subjects can deny recognition to the sovereign, and under certain conditions they can claim a certain sovereignty of their own: no political leader is ever fully in control. In most instances this truth can be forgotten—at the DMV, when a car comes to a red light, when a letter arrives from the IRS. But in what Andrew Shryock calls the "unruled regions of social life" where hospitality occurs, sovereignty is put to the test (2008, 419).

What's more, as anyone who has read the anthropological literature on the topic can attest, one gesture of hospitality leads to another, and the politics of the situation are never clear-cut (see Mauss 1990 [1950]; see also da Col 2012; Marsden 2012; Shryock 2004, 2008, 2009, and 2012). Before there was immigration there was colonization: the movement of people from north to south. The United States became a sovereign nation by creating treaties with other sovereign nations—those of native North Americans—to take just one example of the colonial entanglements on which contemporary sovereignty rests (Cattelino 2008). Today's guests are yesterday's hosts—and possibly tomorrow's. The poem—like this chapter—invites us to contemplate a turning of the tables. It asks us to imagine what might happen

to the narrator if his venomous guest turned on him. But it also asks what would happen to him, and the "voices of his human education," were he to follow that dangerous other back through the "dark door of the secret earth" into a space he could no longer claim as his own.

Like D. H. Lawrence's water trough, the Wissel Lakes district was a place of danger and hospitality—a place where potentially violent guests encountered potentially violent hosts. In this chapter I set the scene for our exploration of Dutch efforts to extend the reach of the colonial state into this region and how they contributed to the image of New Guinea as a Stone Age land. Like their counterparts on the Australian side of the island, Dutch officials serving in the district relied on the hospitality of local people to support them in this endeavor. They had to operate in a rugged landscape, which they were able to traverse only with the help of local leaders, on whose "friendship" their success—and survival—came to rest. Instead of displaying Dutch potency, these expeditions sometimes devolved into performances of vulnerability. The goal of the exercise was for the Dutch officials to assert sovereignty over the territory: that is, to demonstrate the Netherlands Indies state's "supreme and absolute power" over this benighted realm (Bodin 1992; see also Rutherford 2012b). But its Stone Age inhabitants didn't always cooperate. Sometimes they incorporated the intruders into their own political projects. Sometimes, like the snake in the poem, they turned away—and in turning claimed a certain sovereignty of their own.

The western half of New Guinea began the twentieth century as a backwater of the Netherlands Indies. By the 1950s it sheltered the final vestige of Dutch colonial power in Asia. Today it is a troubled territory ruled by the Republic of Indonesia, against the wishes of many of its inhabitants, who would like to have their own independent state. In the 1930s Dutch officials picked the newly "discovered" Wissel Lakes region as the site for the first permanent government post on the Dutch half of New Guinea's highlands. We have already encountered the two

charismatic Dutch officers who took the lead in this mission: Jan van Eechoud, the police commissioner who built the initial settlement, and Jan Victor de Bruijn, who as the district's controller was made responsible for this chunk of colonial real estate in this not-yet-pacified land. De Bruijn in particular explicitly presented hospitality as a key component of colonial state building. This approach allowed him to dream of colonialism with the brutality airbrushed out.

Exploring this dimension of de Bruijn's and his colleagues' writings will give us a chance to begin reflecting on what happens when we use the concept of hospitality as a lens for examining colonial state building. Let's begin with de Bruijn's first expedition, which took him to a surprisingly welcoming land.

Hospitality in the Stone Age

It was a lovely trip, and everything worked out perfectly. It's hard not to conclude that Dr. Jan Victor de Bruijn was living a charmed life. Such is the image one gets from *Jungle Pimpernel*, a 1947 hagiography by the travel writer Lloyd Rhys, which chronicles de Bruijn's service in New Guinea before the war (see also Vlasblom 2004, 93–101). Son of a wealthy planter, raised on Java and then sent to the program for civil servants at Leiden University for his degree, de Bruijn had several years of experience in the Indies' "Great East" and a doctorate under his belt by the time he reached the Wissel Lakes.[1] De Bruijn was versed in Javanese antiquity, the topic of his dissertation, but his heart lay in New Guinea. He requested a posting in the highlands. After an eight-month stint on Ceram, an island in the Moluccas, he got his wish. When Dr. Stutterheim, the district's first controller, resigned after just a few months, the resident in Ambon chose de Bruijn to replace him. He reached Enarotali, the headquarters, in 1939 on a pontoon plane that took off from the coastal post in Fak-Fak and landed on Paniai Lake (Rhys 1947, 16).

De Bruijn spent his first months learning the ropes. He began compiling word lists in the district's different languages. But

mostly the new controller entertained guests. Enarotali lay on the northeastern shoreline of Lake Paniai, a vast body of water bordered by grassy peaks and a scattering of Kapauku communities, whose inhabitants grew sweet potatoes, fished, and raised and sold pigs for cowrie shells, both locally and along a major intertribal trade route connecting the central highlands with Mimika on the southern coast.[2] (Other Kapauku lived in the valleys surrounding Lake Tigi and Lake Tage, to the south and east.) Although they also traded in salt, Kapauku "think in pigs," as one missionary put it: raising and trading them was a key path to prestige, and they slaughtered them only during life cycle rituals and at feasts that attracted hundreds of participants and took months to plan and carry out (Vlasblom 2004, 97). The typical Kapauku village consisted of a dozen or so loosely clustered dwellings, raised off the ground to shelter livestock and divided into sections for men and for women and their children. The Dutch colonial settlement wasn't much bigger: it consisted of a barracks, which housed de Bruijn along with the native doctor and twenty native police; a hut for the 120 coolies and 30 convict laborers tasked with manning the supply line that provisioned the post; a few pens for goats, geese, and chickens; a basic clinic; and a jail. Shortly after the settlement's founding, Protestant and Catholic mission societies opened small stations, although their activities receive relatively little mention in de Bruijn's or his colleagues' accounts of their work (see Giay 1995, 1999; Ploeg 2007).

Visitors to the government post included the Kapauku—also known as Ekari or Isani, depending on whom you asked—and their eastern neighbors the Moni (initially called Djonggonau before de Bruijn realized his predecessors had confused the name of a clan with the name of their tribe), with people from other tribes mixed in. De Bruijn, writes Rhys,

> knew the value of friendship, and was determined that these people should be his friends. Upon them rested not only the success or failure of his work, but his life itself lay in their hands. So he went to talk to them in their villages, and when they in turn came to him, he went out of his way to make them feel welcome. He gave instructions that no fences were to be erected around the administrative

> huts at Enarotali, and to de Bruijn's hut no man, on any occasion, was to be denied admission.
>
> In due course, as he gained their confidence, they visited his hut; sometimes they would stand quietly watching him at work, or would squat on the earth floor and chat. Often they brought him presents, and might stay to lunch, and some even remained to stay the night by his fire. Never were they driven away. (Rhys 1947, 27)

That's not to say there was no limit to de Bruijn's patience: "occasionally too many visitors came to his hut, and it would be difficult to concentrate on the radio." To avoid violating his own policy, de Bruijn had to get creative. One method he used "was to attach two lengths of electric wire to sticks as handles and give them to two of the men to hold. The shock was mild, but enough to make them afraid" (Rhys 1947, 197). It was a delicate balance. The establishment of Dutch sovereignty required making the local people afraid enough to respect their new rulers, but not so much that they would flee.

De Bruijn worked hard to be a good host, but he worked equally hard to be a good guest. The two sides of his method of governance went together, as we see in excerpts from his 1939 report on one of his first exploratory journeys into the territory he was now responsible for governing (Rhys 1947, 31–47). The party included a Dutch botanist, a Dutch police commander, an Ambonese civil servant, a Javanese doctor, five native police, and twenty-six native bearers, who included Javanese convicts, Papuans from the Bird's Head peninsula (a more accessible part of the island), and a couple of his Ekari houseboys. De Bruijn gave himself twenty days to reach Zanepa at the farthest eastern reaches of the jurisdiction, where he hoped to find a route to the "terra incognita" between the lakes and the recently discovered Baliem Valley.[3] He traveled through the Moni territory of Kemandora, in good part due to the urging of visitors from this valley. A handful had made "first contact" with de Bruijn in Enarotali in November 1938; in February seventeen more came, bringing him pigs and receiving knives, beads, and mirrors in return; and finally, just a few days before his departure, two more showed up. These two agreed to accompany de Bruijn on the trip.

The travelers set out from Enarotali on a trail across the bogs that bordered the Weaboe River, which flowed into Lake Paniai from the east. Climbing up from the shore, they came over a hill and into a muddy plain, before passing into a rocky region where hundred-foot boulders blocked their way. Their first stop was Koegapa, a Moni enclave in Kapauku territory, built on infertile soil at the base of the Brundage Range, which rose to 13,100 feet. De Bruijn picked up some guides in this "picturesque little village," which had hosted Cator and van Eechoud on their way to Enarotali. From Koegapa the party climbed through the mud across abandoned gardens and steep, fern-covered slopes onto the crumbling ridge. Having ascended to 8,000 feet, now they dropped into a dense forest, where they picked up a tributary of the Egaboe River and found a stopping place in Eagedidi, a humble Kapauku village where they received sugar cane and yams.

The journey unfolded as a series of joyful encounters. Repeatedly de Bruijn saw faces he recognized in the crowds that gathered to greet him. On the morning of the fourth day of the trip, the party left Eagedidi and headed in the direction of another village, Toujamoeti.

> February 23. At 9:45 we reached the summit, where we rested and roasted some potatoes. Then we had to descend again, and a quarter of an hour later we came upon a Zoegini-Ekari and two Itodah-Djonggonaus, who seemed to have great influence, since we could already hear shouts of joy. In the clearing, we were welcomed by thirty men with wild singing and loud dancing. It appears they were a number of Itodah Djonggonau and people from Kemandora; Zalekigi was with them. Many had their faces partly or wholly painted a fiery red; others were notable for their headdresses of cassowary and bird of paradise . . . All this made for a cheerful and refreshing scene. (de Bruijn 1939a, 21)

Joining de Bruijn as a guide, Soalekigi, as de Bruijn came to spell the name of the man who became his "best friend," played a central role in this and the Dutch officer's other expeditions (see Rutherford 2009). Soalekigi was familiar with Dutch visitors. He'd been on hand when Wissel flew his amphibious airplane

over Lake Paniai. He'd heard the rumble and seen the "heavenly boat," a narrow vessel equipped with outriggers—that is, pontoons—suddenly appear in the clear blue sky, sending men and women jumping in panic out of their canoes. He'd hidden in his house for the next two days, sure that the Mado—a dangerous water spirit—was on the loose. Soalekigi had also been on hand when H. C. Bijlmer, the doctor and anthropologist, and Father Tilleman, the Catholic missionary based in Oeta, reached the southern edge of the region and the Moni sent a delegation to see the strange men. He had been present when Cator led an expedition past Itodah, the mixed Kapauku and Moni village where Soalekigi lived. Soalekigi had been one of a handful of Papuan leaders taken by airplane to Fak-Fak, where there was a larger Dutch post, and Ambon, the Moluccan city that was the headquarters of the "Great East." (Another who joined the party was a Moni man, whom we'll meet later; he wore a shirt, shoes, and a hat he had received from de Bruijn's boss.) Later he had the privilege of accompanying de Bruijn when he conducted an aerial survey of the territory to the east of the lakes. In a small gesture that reflected this trove of experiences, he startled de Bruijn by reaching to shake de Bruijn's hand, Western style, at the very moment the Dutch official was preparing to greet him in the Moni fashion with a crooked forefinger and closed fist.

With Soalekigi as his "talisman"—to quote another official who benefited from traveling with a local "friend"—de Bruijn and his men received an unending stream of pigs and piglets, sweet potatoes, and offers to spend the night (Bijlmer n.d., 132). From Eagedidi, de Bruijn and his companions forged on to the Egaboe River, which they crossed on a rattan bridge, then the Araboe River, which they waded, before arriving in the Kapauku village of Koemopa. The party spent the night at Koemapa and then, on the sixth day of traveling, arrived in the Kemandora Valley with birdsong filling the air. Beginning in the Kapauku village of Girambari, huge crowds began greeting the travelers. In Girambari no fewer than a hundred men and women were waiting on a hilltop, singing and dancing, with pigs, sweet potato, and sugar cane ready for their guests.[4] The Moni were some-

what more openhanded than the Ekari—and de Bruijn's report is filled with comparisons that are unflattering to the latter; they weren't "cheerful and refreshing" but rather "snarling and filthy" and drove a hard bargain to boot. In addition to being generous, the Moni were unafraid. Hundreds would pour into camp, where they joined de Bruijn in his tent, inspecting his backpack for contact articles and lighting their cigarettes on his own. "It was all so uninhibited, it was all done so kindly and genially that we felt right at home" (de Bruijn 1939, 43–44). Not only did the villagers welcome the strangers; as the expedition continued, more and more of them joined them in groups large enough to stamp a wide swath through the underbrush. As they walked, they sang and drummed on the provision drums, announcing de Bruijn's arrival to the next community on the route.

From Girambali the travelers proceeded to the Kapauku village of Jotali, where de Bruijn visited his first Papuan salt well. They traveled on to a "great river" called the Kemaboe, which was brown with silt. They stopped in the Moni villages of Wandai and Mesiga, where they received a very warm welcome, and finally arrived in Zanepa, the endpoint of their trip at the farthest eastern reaches of the valley. There de Bruijn raised the Dutch flag and danced around it with a large local crowd.

De Bruijn ended the trip feeling convinced that these "primitive children of Kemandora" would make wonderful colonial subjects, if the government would only give them a chance.

> The population is well-disposed and peaceful and appreciates contact with the West in very high measure. The first contact was unusually cordial; we were everywhere received in a way that was above all praise. Never would we have imagined that in an expedition to the as yet unknown interior of New Guinea, that everywhere we would be received so heartily, everywhere we would feel so at ease, everywhere the people would have such faith in the government, in we people from the West. I am of the opinion that all those who took part in this trip, feel the faith put in us as a duty . . . to give back to these simple mountain people, these worthy Dutch subjects, more than what passes around here for enough. (de Bruijn 1939, 89)

Later in his career, de Bruijn no doubt thought back on this trip. "In 1939," he explained in a lecture on civil administration in New Guinea, "the post at Enarotali was a new experiment, because it was the first time an Administrative Post had been established in a country of people who were still living in the Neolithic stone age period, and in a region which had always been isolated from foreign influences and even Indonesian influences, so the people have preserved their own racial origin and customs" (in Rhys 1947, 28). In such circumstances, de Bruijn went on, "the administration should be divided up into two periods, the first to be one of exploration, orientation, and study, and should occupy seven years. Then the change could be made to full administration" (ibid., 28). De Bruijn laid out this plan with an eye to what he saw as the needs of people he described as "sensitive and child-like, with a certain amount of cunning, and like a child very sensitive to rough treatment" (ibid., 28). Going slow would enable the Dutch administration to "supervise contacts with Western civilization" and avoid "thrusting" modern customs at hitherto isolated groups.

Generalized to the entirety of New Guinea, this approach provided a blueprint for continued Dutch colonization. "Still living in the Neolithic stone age period," the Papuans would need ongoing guidance. The colonial mission would unfold very gradually, leaving the Dutch in control for generations to come. In the Wissel Lakes, events outran de Bruijn's plans, and he soon found himself thrusting at least some modern customs at the locals. In January 1939 the first Protestant missionaries arrived: C. R. Deibler and W. M. Post from the Christian and Missionary Alliance. The two men posted native teachers in Enarotali, Oweamani, Daroto, Beko, Oretadi, Kebo, and Koemopa. De Bruijn welcomed the evangelists and set in place a policy leaving the northern communities to the Protestants and the southern ones to the Catholics in the form of Father Tillemans, who operated out of Oeta, the nearest town to the Wissel Lakes on the coast.[5]

During World War II, the period that is the main focus of Rhys's book, de Bruijn remained in the highlands to provide in-

telligence to the Allied forces after the Japanese invaded New Guinea. With one notable exception, before the war, de Bruijn had managed to perform his duties without his troops deploying lethal force. This changed when he found himself compelled to execute "traitors" who threatened to expose him to the enemy; these included kinsmen of the people who had earlier welcomed him with open arms (Rhys 1947, 198). Still, de Bruijn's vision of a "cordial" form of colonialism was seductive—not only to him but to others in the pre- and postwar administration. It seemed to suit the Papuans' position in the racial hierarchy that informed Dutch approaches to the colony's diverse native subjects. But above all, it suited the times.

Rent to Own

The times were the 1930s, and we must expand our horizons to gain a sense of why de Bruijn took on the commitments he did. Although he shared the same thirst for adventure, de Bruijn came from a colonial world very different from the one inhabited by the Australian patrol officers who mounted expeditions in the Territory of Papua's southern highlands during the same decade. To take just one example, Jack Hides, the protagonist in Schieffelin and Crittendon's excellent 1991 study, was born and raised in Port Moresby, the capital of Australian Papua, and belonged to a relatively young colonial society focused exclusively on New Guinea. In 1936, when Hides set out to explore the uncharted territory between the Strickland and Purari Rivers, European investment on the eastern side of New Guinea was beginning to pay off. Also controlled by Australia, the former German colony just to the north of the region Hides visited had thriving plantations, gold mines, and highland towns. De Bruijn, by contrast, was born and raised a thousand miles to New Guinea's west, on Java, in the center of a vast island empire. In the epic of Dutch colonialism in Asia, New Guinea was merely a footnote. De Bruijn brought his own particular baggage to the field.

A few facts from de Bruijn's biography are worth noting. Al-

though his biographer does not use the term, de Bruijn was an Indo-European, to use the term then in currency: a Dutch citizen born in the Indies of mixed-race parents. In the early twentieth century "Indies for the Indiers" was a rallying cry for a "people" that included both natives and Europeans from the mestizo community Dutch colonialism had made.[6] More than that, de Bruijn, one will remember, was a product of Leiden University. Long a center for knowledge of Indies ethnology, Leiden was the birthplace of the so-called Ethical Policy, which, beginning in the late nineteenth century, promoted the uplift of the Indies' natives through the establishment of new roads, clinics, and schools (see Locher-Scholten 1981).

Despite his deep roots in the colony, de Bruijn entered the civil service at a moment in the Indies' history when men like himself had reasons to feel unwelcome. In the 1930s the ethical type of colonial official—urbane, educated, an admirer of native arts and crafts—was facing competition from a new generation of civil servants: Dutch born and sympathetic to business interests and right-wing causes, ruggedly masculine in style (Rutherford 2012b, chap. 3). The early part of the century had seen a native awakening on Java with the formation of clubs, trade unions, and political parties among the Dutch-speaking native elite, and later among the native masses. The colonial government at first welcomed this awakening, then cracked down hard when it became clear that Dutch sovereignty was under threat. The Ethical Policy had originally focused on the inhabitants of Java. But by the 1930s natives at the center of the colony were no longer playing their part as the grateful recipients of Dutch largesse. Before the 1930s New Guinea was considered a hardship post. Around the time de Bruijn was completing his education, the territory started looking to ambitious young officials like a good place to start the Ethical Policy over and do it right.

If de Bruijn's vision of New Guinea's future bore the marks of his moment, the idea of a cordial form of colonialism wasn't new. Hospitality had been a theme in Dutch colonialism in the sixteenth century (see Andaya 1993), when officers from the Dutch

East India Company (hereafter the Company) established themselves as long-term visitors in the Moluccas. Toppling rivals and destroying livelihoods to protect their monopoly in nutmeg and cloves, they were the intrusive sort of house guest—you would never say that the Company was "no trouble at all." In the nineteenth century, when forced cultivation of export crops was impoverishing Javanese villagers, the newly established colonial government had comforted itself with the fiction that its officials were welcome visitors, with Dutch residents standing by the side of the Javanese regents who collected taxes and kept the peasants under control.

The Dutch began as visitors, but they quickly became squatters: they rented under favorable terms, paying with the privileges and perks they bestowed on the native elite, with an eye to own. The fact that Europeans were legally prohibited from purchasing land reflects this wider colonial logic: the governing Dutch resident of Ternate wasn't in fact a resident, and if Dutch officials wanted access to property, their only choice was to lease. This history played into discussions of Dutch New Guinea in the 1930s. Besides its backwardness, these discussions stressed two things: the western side of the island was a potential site for Indo-European agricultural colonies, and, like the east side, it could have gold. Throughout much of the Indies' history, colonial reports from Dutch New Guinea had played up the "inhospitality" of New Guinea and its inhabitants. But in the 1930s New Guinea's image began to change.

The racial hierarchy that justified Dutch colonialism in the Indies played a key role in this transformation of New Guinea from a colonial backwater into a potential colonial center. This hierarchy had a history dating back to the seventeenth century, when the Company first established a foothold in the region that became the Indies. The Company initially barred European women from emigrating to Asia in order to forestall European settlement, which would have threatened the Company's trade monopoly. Instead the Company promoted concubinage, and unions between European men and native and mixed-race

women became the norm. A mestizo society thus took shape in Batavia and other Company outposts. At the top of the social ladder were European officers and their mixed-race wives; the next rung held their mixed-race progeny, whom the officers had the option of recognizing as European. The officers' sons became clerks, military officers, and plantation managers; their daughters often married other officials and became Company wives. Below them were Chinese merchants, native Christians employed by the Company, and the native aristocrats through whom the Company laid claim to labor and land. Native peasants and coolies followed, and then, on the very lowest rung, stood the Papuans, who appeared in the Company records as pirates or, more frequently, slaves.

After the Company went bankrupt in the early nineteenth century, the new government of the Netherlands Indies codified these divisions by instituting a plural legal system. Most natives fell under the jurisdiction of a particular "customary circle" (*adatkring*), whereas Europeans, "foreign Orientals," and selected natives of a more civilized (read: Christian) bent could appeal to European law. Malay, the mestizo society's lingua franca, became the Indies' official language of administration; unlike the English and the French, the Dutch did not encourage natives to speak their rulers' tongue.

The population of Europeans in the Indies remained relatively tiny throughout the colonial period; in the 1930s it comprised less than half a percent of the colony's sixty million inhabitants. Since the law prevented landownership from becoming a basis for social status or political power, white-collar work in the bureaucracy, plantations, oil fields, and mines was the only option for those who wished to move up the social ranks. This restriction posed problems for the so-called *blijvers* or settlers, especially at the end of the nineteenth century, when improvements in communications and transportation brought increasing numbers of *totok* or "pure-blooded" men and, significantly, women from Europe to the Indies. This new white colonial elite displaced the older community in the higher echelons of private enterprise and

the bureaucracy. The older community also faced competition from below. In the 1930s educated natives began to beat Indo-Europeans with less education than de Bruijn in the competition for middle-ranking jobs.

For their part, the Papuans de Bruijn encountered confronted the contradictions that beset those relegated to the lowest rung of the racial ladder. Nestling uncomfortably alongside a vision of a colony divided into "customary circles" was the image of a landscape of civilizational peaks and troughs, topped by the so-called Indic Kingdoms of Java and Bali with their putatively Aryan roots. The very name New Guinea signals the Papuans' racial positioning: here was a piece of Africa in an Asian domain. In the 1930s the Papuans' "savagery" allowed right-wing supporters of the formation of agricultural colonies for Indo-Europeans in Dutch New Guinea to argue that the island was "terra nulla," a place empty of customary law. They presented the island as a refuge where Indies land and labor policies need not apply. Europeans could enjoy land rights in Dutch New Guinea without going native, because its inhabitants were supposedly too primitive to understand what property was.

Indo-European colonization in New Guinea remained more or less on the level of fantasy, with only a handful of individuals making the "trek." A few families settled near the government posts in Manokwari and Hollandia, but the mass migration the supporters of colonization called for never transpired. But debates over New Guinea's colonization provided a dress rehearsal of sorts for when the Dutch hived off New Guinea from the rest of the Indies following World War II. Although the Dutch had a long history of proposing different approaches for use in different regions, the idea that New Guinea should have its own laws and policies—and its own scholarly journals and associations—dates from this time (Penders 2002). New Guinea was different, observers noted, which meant more permissive rules on contract labor and European land rights should apply. Conversations in the 1930s set the stage for western New Guinea's transformation in the Dutch imagination into the perfect refuge for a displaced

colonial state. New Guinea never effectively belonged to the Indies, proponents of continued Dutch colonization argued in 1949; hence it did not need to be included in the transfer of sovereignty to Indonesia. In the 1950s the very things that had made the region inhospitable to Europeans were now seen as making it the perfect home. Some observers may have imagined New Guinea's inhabitants as too primitive to own property. And yet they had to be seen as capable of welcoming Dutch intervention to legitimate their homeland's continued colonization at a time when European imperialism was supposedly passé. And so the Papuans, like the Indies' other natives, ended up having to deal with guests who refused to leave.

De Bruijn's idealized image of state building as a friendly form of visitation was distinctive, but it was not unique. Jack Hides, the patrol officer mentioned above, peppered his writings on his trip in the southern highlands of Australian Papua with references to "hospitable" and treacherous natives (see Schieffelin and Crittendon 1991). Hides began his expedition as committed as de Bruijn and his colleagues were to maintaining peaceful relations with the natives. But in his five and a half months on the trail, his police escort shot and killed over thirty women and men. By contrast, de Bruijn and his colleagues' much shorter expeditions were love fests, with the communities they visited all but vying for the title of most magnanimous host. In part this difference in outcome reflected eastern New Guinea's more brutal colonial history. In the German colony that became the Mandate Territory, the first Europeans to reach the interior were labor recruiters who kidnapped hapless men in their fields. In the British colony that became Papua, patrol officers brought unruly tribes under control by shooting first and asking questions later.[7] De Bruijn's immediate predecessors were ornithologists and mountain climbers who avoided violent altercations with the locals. Hides's were gold prospectors, for whom the death toll was likely higher; Tom and Jack Fox's expedition through a highland region directly adjacent to Hides's route "left a path strewn with accounts of shootings, deaths and near misses," with up to ten

warriors killed in one day (Schieffelin and Crittendon 1991, 99). Hides's boss, the colony's chief administrator, Sir Hubert Murray, favored gentler treatment for the Papuan. Still, the colony's history had established certain habits of interaction, and rumors of violence no doubt shaped local people's expectations of what to expect from the strange beings intruding on their land.

But this difference also had to do with the nature of the social worlds through which these travelers passed. De Bruijn's guides were local leaders, but his guards were non-Papuan troops, who were arguably out of their element in the highlands. Following a long-standing tradition on the eastern half of New Guinea, Hides's guards were Papuan police officers, some of whom were traditional enemies of the people being visited, and who had the confidence—and in some cases an incentive—to act on their own. Hides packed only enough rice to make it through the uninhabited regions. But unlike his Dutch counterparts, he rarely found villagers willing to give or sell him the sweet potatoes he needed to feed his men. Based on the direction from which they entered the territory, many of the people Hides and his companions met assumed that the visitors were dangerous spirits with no need for food, whom they were eager to see on their way. Few saw any value in the steel axes the patrol officers had to offer; those who were willing to trade wanted pearl shells, and the Australians had none. Hides counted on the hospitality of local people—and he nearly starved. De Bruijn, like his predecessors, traveled in the company of ambitious, adventurous local men who saw reasons to play host to the wealthy strangers—and to play guest in their outposts and towns. He had the good fortune to have stumbled into a society where would-be leaders competed for wealth, status, and political influence by cultivating partners in distant places. Soalekigi seems to have been fond of de Bruijn, but he also had reasons to think he might benefit from accompanying the Dutch.[8]

De Bruijn may well have read *Papuan Wonderland*, Hides's swashbuckling account of his adventure. If so, like Hides's successors, he learned from the patrol officer's mistakes. He trav-

eled with a plentiful supply of cowries and imposed standardized prices to head off inflation. He never ventured beyond the areas where local people told him it was safe to go. He made a point of learning the basics of the languages spoken in the communities he visited on his trip (Rhys 1947, 28). Yet his fate wasn't entirely in his own hands. A particular colonial moment within the Indies and beyond shaped de Bruijn's and his colleagues' approach to state building, but so too did the preoccupations and expectations of the people whose lands they traversed. How did de Bruijn's Papuan "friends" experience their relationship with the newcomers? I don't have the kind of firsthand accounts from Papuan witnesses that Schieffelin and Crittendon (1991) and other scholars have drawn upon, but I have found clues in the colonial record. Let's take another look.

Captive Guests

Things didn't always come as easily to de Bruijn and his colleagues as they did during that trip to Kemandora. In the following chapter I describe the challenges Jan van Eechoud faced in his effort to establish the post at Enarotali: planes that were grounded due to cloud cover, supplies that couldn't be dropped, coolies who abandoned their loads and disappeared into the forest, rifles that jammed during demonstrations meant to persuade the Papuans of their visitors' might. While it is true that villagers who welcomed the Dutch travelers and their companions soon learned they could expect something in return—from metal axes to the pleasure of having a story to recount to friends and relatives not lucky enough to have been on the scene—the very impulses that led Papuan communities to be hospitable could also compel Papuan guides to lead their visitors astray. De Bruijn never asked what was at stake for the Papuans who welcomed him so warmly—he took for granted their good intentions, not to mention their uncanny ability to recognize the superiority of Western ways.

Other officials were more skeptical, making more of the often

abundant evidence that at least some Papuan leaders had an eye for the main chance. In his account of a 1936 expedition, H. J. T Bijlmer (n.d.), a doctor and amateur anthropologist of the head-measuring variety, describes the "help" he received from Auki, a Kapauku chief of "no small influence." Auki was another key individual in the history of European exploration in the highlands. Father Tillemans, who accompanied Bijlmer, was the first to meet him. Auki was a "well-travelled man" who had been on frequent trips to the coast to trade tobacco for salt. Auki could speak the coastal language, which allowed him to converse with the missionary; he had even seen the sea (Vlasblom 2004, 94). Upon the Dutch party's arrival in Auki's village, "a multitude of people streamed towards us from all directions, along paths that we had spent hours wandering. These were friendly people, ready to be kindly disposed to our visit and who now that they understood we had in fact arrived felt compelled to be hospitable" (Bijlmer n.d., 168). The expedition's food stores were running low, and there was talk of leaving, but Auki intervened. "He invited us to stay for a while. He naturally suspected that we would collect all kinds of to him worthless rubbish and that I above all would go to work on the people with my odd instruments. But he also knew that we would pay well for it. My treasure of cowries must be inexhaustible; plus we had all kinds of pretty beads and other trinkets; even more, we had axes!" (ibid., 171). Auki spread the word, and villagers from throughout the densely populated valley flocked to see the strangers. And he himself took a cut of their earnings. Auki straddled the boundary between guest and host, making his village into a foreign land. He was a guest in the enclave the visitors had created. But in playing host to his fellow Papuans, he presented himself as belonging to this strange clinical scene—and having the right to determine who could enter and who could not.

Another Kapauku leader, Weakabo, appears to have been pursuing the same ends when he led van Eechoud on a long detour so that the expedition would end up in his own home village (van Eechoud 1953, 18; see also van Eechoud 1938). Weakebo was the

son of the village chief of Jaba, a village near Tigi, the southernmost of the Wissel Lakes. Like Soelakigi, he was well traveled and had strong credentials as a middleman, having also escorted Dr. Cator, the first official to reach the Wissel Lakes (Vlasblom 2004, 100; Rhys 1947, 49–50; Giay 1999).[9] Delayed in his journey to the lake, van Eechoud arrived with only four days' worth of provisions and had to part with a large portion of his contact articles to obtain enough local food to feed his troops. A similar incident befell Cator during one of his two attempts to reach Lake Paniai. In this case it was de Bruijn's friend Soalekigi who led the travelers astray by insisting they stop at the Moni enclave at Koegapa. The Dutch were guests, but they were guests at the mercy of their Papuan hosts. They were captives when it came to their ability to move independently through the rugged landscape and to keep themselves safe and fed.

But it would be wrong to put the Papuans' enthusiasm down to the greed of their leaders. It's not clear that *greed* is even the right word to use in a setting where material objects clearly played a critical role in the production of identities and social worlds (see Pospisil 1963). It would also be wrong to follow de Bruijn in reducing these interactions to an encounter between two sides. De Bruijn's traveling companions included an ethnically varied mixture of people. He used the pronoun *we*, but like the other officials, he was often the only European on a trip. None of the people de Bruijn visited would have called themselves Papuans; he was told that Papuans were those pathetic loincloth wearers down on the coast. In the 1930s the Moni's victory over the Kapauku would have been fresh in local memories. Leaders on both sides were no doubt working to protect their group by forging close bonds with the Dutch. When Soalekigi, his family, and the throngs of villagers fell in among de Bruijn's men, we can guess that they weren't just being friendly. They were presenting themselves as aligned with the visitors—and partaking of the power, pleasure, and intrigue that swirled around this ambulatory social world.

We should keep this in mind when considering the myths

referred to by almost every Dutch visitor—myths that presented the foreigners as the descendants of long-lost relatives. The Kapauku had theirs, and so did the Moni: they spoke of a woman named Sitoegoemina, born far to the east, who stole a giant cowry from her brothers and ran to the west, where she created the Wissel Lakes before continuing on to "Soerabaya, the land beyond New Guinea," where she lived among the white people and made possible their enormous wealth (Rhys 1947, 183–84).[10] Soerabaya is a large maritime city on the east end of Java where the colonial navy had its headquarters. The fact that the term was in such broad circulation offers evidence of the degree to which the inhabitants of this apparently "isolated" land kept their fingers on the pulse of colonial politics—albeit a pulse they interpreted in their own specific ways. The Dutch explorers and officials who visited the Wissel Lakes domesticated alterity by depicting the Papuans as their Stone Age ancestors. The region's inhabitants, meanwhile, used their own methods to make these intrusive strangers into figures they could embrace.

Or refuse to embrace, which also happened quite often. An expedition comes to a clearing near a village: no one appears. A group of women watch from a safe distance; none approach. Days could go by without a sighting of local villagers. The travelers were at their most pitiful while traveling what seemed to be abandoned land.

In the years following World War II, when Netherlands New Guinea had become a separate colony, and de Bruijn and van Eechoud had risen through the ranks, a new crop of outsiders arrived in the Wissel Lakes District to finish the job the earlier officials had started. Heartwarming encounters became fewer and further between.

Lights Out, No One Home

Before the war, there were Papuans whose doors were not open. De Bruijn and his colleagues wrote of the unwelcoming inhabitants of Kebo, on the north side of Paniai Lake, who sent volleys

of arrows whenever visitors approached (see Ravenswaaij Classen 1939, 23). This was the one time de Bruijn reported resorting to arms during the initial period of state building. Recruiting a hundred volunteers from among his Kapauku friends and neighbors—who just happened to be at war with the culprits—the Dutch official led an expedition that ended in looting, burning, and the killing of livestock and left a number of Papuans dead. A handful of men from the village landed in jail—a fate most Kapauku considered worse than death—where they languished until their kinsmen ransomed them with a herd of pigs.

As the years went by, the number of unwelcoming highlanders grew. Unlike the Wiru, a highlands group from Papua New Guinea whose colonial history is the subject of an enlightening study by the late Jeffrey Clark (2011), the inhabitants of the Wissel Lakes were not cheerleaders for the civilizing mission. The rapid changes that accompanied intensified Dutch rule seem to have left them cold. After the war, the inhabitants of another valley rose up, and the government had to recruit Weakabo Mote and his relatives to get them under control (see Giay 1999). Long a fixture among Papuan fixers, Weakabo maintained his close relations with the new crop of Dutch officials who had reopened the post at Enarotali after the Japanese fled and the Dutch administration returned. By the 1950s Enarotali had become a much bigger place, with an airstrip, shops, schools, even a small hotel in addition to the barracks, the hospital, and the jail (see Boelen 1955). (The Dutch transferred sovereignty over the rest of the Indies to the Republic of Indonesia in 1949.)[11] Outsiders were no longer just visitors to the region; they came with the intention of staying long term. Some were mixed-raced Europeans from Java who had fled the Indonesian revolution. Others were "loyal" Indies natives. Still others belonged to more "civilized" Papuan tribes, including people from Biak who could catch a direct flight to Enarotali from their island off the northern coast. These newcomers served as teachers, preachers, health workers, and agricultural extension workers. They made themselves right at home.

Although they frequented Enarotali on occasion, the Wissel

Lakes' original inhabitants were not exactly welcome. The newcomers called them "stupid"; even the coastal Papuans viewed them as hicks (see Rutherford 2015). Nor were the newcomers exactly welcome in the district's villages. There was a big enough police force to patrol the countryside and, as the official in charge of the district put it, "gradually make the people aware of the authority that ruled them" (Meijer Ranneft 1952, 46).[12] The task wasn't easy. Local people seem to have viewed the police force's rifles as weapons wielded to enrich individual agents or as a resource they could deploy to prevail in local conflicts. "Their conception of the outside world is limited to 'Soerabaya,' where there are great quantities of shells for the taking" (ibid., 59). Other than shells, outsiders had little to offer the average villager. The teachers and preachers received a cool reception as they went about their work.

The most striking change was evident among those who had been the most gracious hosts. During the Japanese Occupation, no good deed to the Dutch went unpunished: desperate to survive, retreating Japanese soldiers pillaged gardens and shot anyone suspected of collaborating with the Dutch. According to I. J. R. Meijer Ranneft (1952, 59), who took over as controller in 1948, local people had "very lively recollections" of the horrors of this period. Some feared that if they welcomed the Dutch back the same thing could happen again with other, more brutal invaders. They weren't wrong. When Indonesia took control of the territory, there were uprisings in the Wissel Lakes region—then known as Paniai—which the Indonesian military suppressed by strafing villages. Hundreds of local people died (see Giay 1995).

The skeptics included de Bruijn's best friend, Soalekigi. K. W. J. Boelen, the doctor who served in Enarotali in the 1950s, reported on his views.

> Soalekigi as well, who had lost several family members and had seen his riches go up in flames, precisely because he had been loyal to the Dutch, did not understand what he had done to deserve this and wanted to have no more contact after the reinstatement (of the

> Dutch colonial government) was complete. ("I know very well that you didn't intend this," he said. "But by virtue of your arrival the Japanese also came. As a result of this, I have suffered great harm, which no one can make right.)[13] (Boelen 1955, 19)

It's no accident that the Wissel Lakes was the site of some of the first anticolonial rebellions to erupt in the highlands (see Giay 1995; Ploeg 2007). A struggle was emerging over the question of who had the right to welcome whom.

Rhys (1947, 26) recounts an episode of first contact from the early days of New Guinea's exploration. "In the log of the *Pera*, under the date of the 16th of March, 1623, it is recorded: 'The people are cunning and suspicious, and by no finesse could they be induced to come near enough to let us catch one or two with the nooses which we had prepared for the purpose.'" The plan was to bring a Papuan back to Europe and display him or her in a cage. For a brief period a handful of colonial officials convinced themselves that their intentions were pure. But in this north-south encounter, hospitality was never as innocent as they wanted it to be.

Welcoming Difference

In 1962 the Dutch finally ended the visit: a United Nations Temporary Executive Authority took over, followed by Indonesia, which proved to be in some respects an even more troublesome guest than the Dutch had ever been (see Rutherford 2012b). Of course the Indonesians did not consider themselves to be visitors in western New Guinea; West Irian, as they called it, was an integral part of the new republic, and they were eager to recover this corner of the nation and bring its inhabitants home. The nature of Indonesian governance is beyond the scope of this book; suffice it to say, the Papuans' suffering has been considerable. This chapter has an obvious lesson: in the ongoing history of Western imperialism, hospitality from the colonized is neither freely given nor fully under the colonizers' control.

In this context, is hospitality thus merely a perversion? Do these brief moments in the history of Dutch colonialism have anything to teach us about hospitality as such? Perhaps. "Hospitality," Derrida writes,

> is culture itself and not simply one ethic among others. Insofar as it has to do with the *ethos*, that is, the residence, one's home, the familiar place of dwelling, inasmuch as it is a manner of being there, the manner in which we relate to ourselves and to others, to others as our own or as foreigners, *ethics is hospitality*; ethics is so thoroughly coexistent with the experience of hospitality. But for this very reason, and because being at home with oneself (*l'être-soi chez soi—l'ipseité même*—the other within oneself) supposes a reception or inclusion of the other which one seeks to appropriate, control, and master according to different modalities of violence, there is a history of hospitality, an always possible perversion of the law of hospitality (which can appear unconditional), and of the laws which come to limit and condition it in its inscription as law. (Derrida 2001, 16–17)

Dutch colonialism in the Wissel Lakes was very much part of what Derrida calls here the "history of hospitality." "Welcome to the Indies" was the motto of the operation, which was designed to "receive" and "include" the inhabitants of the district in a colonial system where they could be "appropriated, controlled, and mastered" according to "modalities of violence" ranging from the jailing of local people to their depiction as Stone Age buffoons. But that's not all there is to the story. Hospitality as ethics, hospitality as culture: this receptivity to the other as other, but also the otherness within, is also hinted at in what we know of Papuan reactions to de Bruijn and his colleagues. In the early 2000s people from Enarotali recalled the period in the region's history when local leaders became *ogai*, or "foreigners," by agreeing to "walk with" the Dutch (see Rutherford 2009). On the basis of my research in Biak, I can also attest to the limits of this receptivity: in making foreign trade goods, narratives, and ways of speaking into sources of value, pleasure, and prestige, Biaks managed to keep a more threatening alterity at bay (see Rutherford 2003). But even the hospitality de Bruijn celebrated was not just a perversion. In

the backcountry of his district, as in his headquarters by the lake, hospitality began with startling moments of encounter like that meeting between man and snake, in which the unexpected gaze of another led someone to discover something strange within himself.

As I close this chapter, I want to invite you to picture yourself walking with de Bruijn down one of those slippery, rocky paths, the cloud cover descending, the river rushing, the rain falling. Picture yourself reaching the river and inching across it on a single woven rope, with only a slender line as a handrail. Picture yourself struggling to keep up with a barefooted guide who moves agilely where you falter and finds a trail where you see none. Picture yourself wondering whether the food you are carrying is moldy. Picture yourself arriving in a clearing to be greeted by the squeal of a piglet and songs in a language you don't know. Now shift perspectives, and picture yourself crouching with a friend in her garden, staring at a distant path, where light flashes on metal. Picture yourself running to share the news and wondering how this strange day will end. Picture yourself wondering what you will see when you look into these strangers' eyes—and what they will see when they look into yours. Picture participating in this dance of sovereignty and vulnerability. Picture wondering who will be the first to turn away.

All this picturing shouldn't be hard if you know anything about ethnography. Wherever anthropologists work—no matter how close to home—the hospitality we ask for and offer is central to our approach. As an opening to the other, hospitality creates the space for our research—just as it created the space for the project of colonial state building in the Wissel Lakes to unfold. Within that space, the sharing of passions and perspectives that I am calling sympathy is arguably our most important method. Sympathy was also the foremost element of the method of colonial state building we are now going to explore.

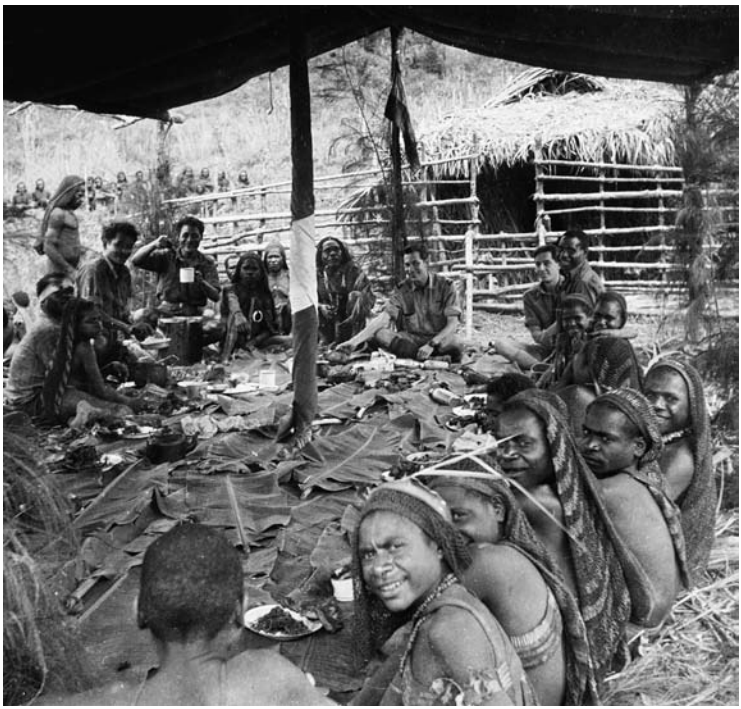

FIGURE 5. Feast with, among others, Vic de Bruijn at the time of the Netherlands Forces Intelligence Service "Operation Oaktree." 1943. National Museum of World Cultures. Coll. no. TM-10008592.

2

Sympathetic State Building

'Tis a quality very observable in human nature, that any opposition, which does not entirely discourage and intimidate us, has rather a contrary effect, and inspires us with a more than ordinary grandeur and magnanimity. In collecting our force to overcome the opposition, we invigorate the soul.
«DAVID HUME, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 1738»

I begin this chapter with a snapshot from Jan Victor de Bruijn, who, as we have learned in the last chapter, spent the late 1930s in the Wissel Lakes district, where, in the words of one admirer, he "built an outpost for the Netherlands Empire among 100,000 Papuans still living in the Stone Age" (Rhys 1947, 175). One of the Papuans along for the trip described in the previous chapter was Kigimoejakigi, whom de Bruijn dubbed "the General" on the basis of his attire: shoes, shorts, sunglasses, and a wide-brimmed hat. The General had received the outfit from de Bruijn's boss, the resident of Ambon, at his headquarters in this sizable Moluccan town, which the Papuan leader had visited as a reward for helping the Dutch. When he set out for Kemandora, de Bruijn knew that the resident was planning to conduct an aerial survey of the region where he was currently hiking. When someone heard an engine, the chief officer and his companions scanned the sky. The General was despondent when the plane flew over

without landing or doubling back despite the party's efforts to catch the pilot's attention. "The General had screamed his loudest [when the plane was directly overhead] because he—and we also—didn't know better than that the resident was up there. He was deeply disappointed, sat still looking into space and mumbling 'Soesah, soesah' [Troubled, troubled]. His eyes were even damp. Poor guy! How well cared for is everything the resident gave him. We comforted him and told him that the resident would come soon" (de Bruijn 1939a, 42–43).

Consider de Bruijn's description of the General's reaction. Standing arrayed in the resident's gifts, the General looks into the air. His outfit is as much a memento as a status symbol, recalling the resident, whom he is dressed to resemble and whom he now imagines looking down at him from above. Having himself flown home from Ambon, the General finds it easy to envision the bird's-eye view of his homeland that Dutch officials regularly enjoy. But this merging of perspectives is thwarted when the resident fails to see him; the General longs for his "friend" in vain. In this passage de Bruijn sympathizes with this Papuan "still living in the Stone Age." He imagines himself standing in the General's shoes and feels what he thinks is his pain.

Why might this ambitious young colonial official have lingered on such a romantic, tearful moment in a report to his superiors? In 1930s New Guinea, the Dutch found themselves compelled to pay close attention to what the Papuans felt and knew. In this chapter, by developing a conception of sympathy that illuminates the dynamics of Dutch state building in New Guinea, I hope to shed new light on imperial state building writ large.

New Guinea is a particularly fruitful place to pursue this inquiry into the role of sympathy in state building. On the vast, rugged island, as in other imperial borderlands, the agents of empire had long found themselves forced to envision how their polity might appear through foreign eyes, including those of their imperial counterparts and the "natives" alike. During the nineteenth century Dutch officials had worried about whether the Papuans would recognize Tidoran authority and obey the native

sultan through whom the Dutch ostensibly ruled New Guinea. In the 1930s, as I have suggested, officials' interactions with the Papuans took on a heightened charge. The declining fortunes of mixed-race Europeans, the rise of Indonesian nationalism, and Dutch officials' long-standing investment in their nation's status as an "enlightened" colonial power: all of these factors played into the phenomenon this chapter explores. The newly discovered central highlands seemed to offer a solution to a panoply of problems: here was a place where officials could build a colonial order from scratch with natives who seemed ready to be schooled in loyalty to the Dutch. But we must consider more than just this broader colonial context to understand why sympathy looms so large in documents like Jan Victor de Bruijn's report. We must consider the nature of the state-building task that these documents describe.

The Imperial and the Empirical

A wealth of recent scholarship has established that empire is an affair of the heart as well as the head. Scholars have shown how the "political rationalities" of colonial authority turn on "assessing proper sentiments" and "fashioning techniques of affective control" designed to foster "reasoned feeling" among citizens and those who serve the state (Stoler 2004, 5). Most notably, Ann Stoler has analyzed programs launched by the Netherlands Indies government to assess and cultivate the loyalty of mixed-race Europeans and other questionable members of the colonial ruling class (1995, 2002, and 2004). But there is an even more intimate way in which, as Stoler puts it, "sentiment" forms the "very substance" of "governing projects" (Stoler 2004, 5). This way is built into the very design and implementation of interventions intended to ensure native submission to the colonial state. To grasp it, we need to scrutinize some mechanisms of governance that, in the wake of French philosopher Michel Foucault (1979 and 1991), we have tended to take for granted. Foucault's account of discipline presumes an exchange of gazes between a subject

and a surveilling other, imagined as watching from on high. But scholars inspired by Foucault have rarely dissected the real-time interactions between officials and their subjects that make up colonial practice. To understand the processes through which empires expand, we need to examine the strange forms of sympathy that these interactions entail.

Toward this end, I am experimenting with ideas from a somewhat unlikely source, the eighteenth-century empiricist philosopher David Hume. Themes from Hume's writings provide the makings for a materialist concept of sympathy that serves as an approach to the analysis of colonial practice by foregrounding the embodied, impassioned encounters involved.[1] *Sympathy*, as I define it, does some of the same work as terms like *recognition* and *identification*. Sympathy encompasses empathy, pity, and compassion, but it can spawn hostility as easily as love. It overlaps with a notion by Chinua Achebe (1988, 149) discussed by Robert Foster: "imaginary identification," "a self-encounter that enables us 'to recreate in ourselves the thoughts that must go on in the minds of others, especially those we dispossess'" (Foster 2001, 66; see also Todorov 1984). But in addition to thought I have in mind something more visceral and immediate, a feeling that springs from and shapes unfolding interactions. For Hume, sympathy registers a gradient of feeling and moral obligation, a sense of two subject positions and the interests associated with them being more or less tightly aligned. The vividness of one's commitments depends on whether the people and outcomes involved are experienced as close or remote, relatively accessible or not.

In making sympathy a matter of degree, Hume defines it as both conceptual and embodied. One encounters another's reactions and one infers—that is, one forms an idea of the sentiments behind them (see Hume 1962 [1738], 226–27). The fact that the other is in some respect like oneself makes this inference possible. The fact that the other is also near one, socially or otherwise, leads to contagion. One traces a behavior to a passion, and the "force and vivacity" of the idea leads one to feel what one thinks the other feels (ibid., 226). For its part, inference rests on what

Hume calls the "feeling" or "instinct" of habit, which leads the mind to read the future off the past (ibid., 128; see also Hume 1988 [1748], 43). Sympathy and inference, like feeling and thinking, are mutually dependent. This is why this materialist conception of sympathy is empirical; it tracks the intricate pathways through which encounters with objects and others give rise to feelings and thoughts. In its insistence on the passionate roots of reasoning, Hume's discussion provides the basis for an enriched understanding of the relationship between affect and empire. State building becomes an affair of the heart in the head and the head in the heart.

The colonial record from the Wissel Lakes district is particularly revealing of the affective dimensions of state building.[2] F. J. Wissel, the first European to see the lakes, was a pilot in the employ of a Dutch and US joint venture that was prospecting for minerals and drilling for oil.[3] Recall that at the time the densely populated area was inhabited by a diverse array of tribes: the majority Me, also known as the Ekari or Kapauku, along with the Moni, Oehoendoeni, and Dani. The discovery of this potential workforce reportedly had an "electrifying effect" on the government (Vlasblom 2004, 95). The scene that unfolded beneath Wissel's plane—cool, lush valleys dotted with villages and drained fields—conjured the dream of finally mastering this far-flung land.

Flying over the Wissel Lakes was one thing; building a state there was another. This mission entailed what Nancy Munn calls the cultural production of spacetime: the building up of "an apprehension of a distanciated world" through "cultural processes that bring it into awareness as a horizon of the present" (Munn 1990, 1; see also Anderson 1991; Goswami 2004). Officials had to encourage the Papuans to define what was happening in a particular time and place as belonging to an array of events also occurring elsewhere, such that the seemingly "local" became imaginable as part of a far more expansive realm. In striving for this effect, de Bruijn and his colleagues could not take for granted the institutions and technologies we assume to be the trappings

of modernity. Rather, they had to build an imagined community of empire out of lived experience, one interaction at a time. They had to do this in a rugged region that to this day paved roads have yet to reach and among people whose languages they scarcely spoke.

These officials' writings make it easy to conceptualize state building as a concrete, contingent process, fraught with what Anna Tsing calls "friction" and David Hume calls "opposition."[4] State building entails the conjuring of conventional horizons or "frames" that specify, to quote Erving Goffman (1986 [1974]), "what was happening here now." Munn's account of the cultural production of spacetime privileges the empirical nature of this conjuring: the bringing into awareness of spatiotemporal apprehensions is a concrete process that unfolds in space and time. Whether they are telling stories, exchanging valuables, or navigating city streets, people invoke a set of conventional horizons (see Munn 1986, 1990, and 2004). But spacetime is the medium, as well as an outcome, of this invocation. We can represent space and time, but our representations can never fully capture the spacetime in which the action of representation unfolds. Tsing (2005) gives us a sense of this problematic in using the notion of "friction" to refer to the differences in culture, power, and scale confronted by environmental activists and multinational corporations in Indonesia. The friction I have in mind not only threatens and facilitates the forging of global connections; it infects and enables every social form. There is always opposition to our projects; something material always pushes back. Hume's writings on sympathy, which foreground its material dimensions, bring this quality of state building to the fore.

De Bruijn's touching account of his travels with the General would have come as no surprise to Hume. For Hume, governance depended on the "artificial" extension of sympathy, which brought the needs and interests of distant others to mind. Hume took issue with social contract theorists who presume that justice entails the use of reason to oppose the natural passions of the individual. Rather, justice requires the extension and correction

of the passion of sympathy, which for Hume begins in the family with the love that binds husband and wife, parent and child. This sympathy is "partial"—preferentially favoring those in a person's immediate "circle"—and thus detrimental to a population that would be better off sharing more widely the resources needed to survive. For property and security to be assured, people's sympathy must extend further than to those in their immediate "circle." Although people can imaginatively widen their gaze to infer the sentiments of distant strangers, the "vividness" of their sympathies dissipates over space and time.

For the purposes of understanding what de Bruijn and his colleagues were up to, it's worth delving into the finer points of Hume's argument. According to Hume, the invention of government "corrects" the "narrowness of soul" that makes people "prefer the present to the remote" (see Hume 1962 [1738], 383). For Hume, government does more than encourage people to envision belonging to an imagined community of anonymous others; this "artifice" orchestrates concrete experiences that bring the interests and viewpoints of fellow citizens into intimate proximity. That is, it orchestrates a deeply material sympathy. The state's agents enforce the law and educate the masses through narratives portraying the public interest. These officials' distinctive circumstances make the pursuit of justice into the "good" that bears the most "contiguous" relationship to their own pleasure and pain. Hume's observation recalls Max Weber's account of the motivations that fuel a bureaucracy: officials depend on the apparatus for their salaries, and their self-esteem rests on their dutiful service to an idealized image of the institution that Weber depicts as "ersatz for the earthly or supramundane master" (Weber 1946, 199). Unlike David Graeber (2006), who stresses bureaucratic "stupidity," the "lopsided structures of the imagination" that render officials unable to exchange perspectives with those they supposedly serve, Hume depicts bureaucracy as an artifice that cultivates intelligence in this regard.

In the same fashion, Hume argues that a "change in situation" also brings the public interest vividly to life for the gov-

erned, who have to obey to avoid losing life and limb. "[Men] cannot change their natures," Hume noted. "All they can do is change their situation, and render the observance of justice the immediate interest of some particular persons, and its violation their more remote" (1962 [1738], 383). Governance depends on the sympathetic responses of variously located individuals, including public servants, potential criminals, and the public at large. The passions of "particular persons," each with their own unique, artfully invented "situation," provide the glue that holds together the state.

This stress on sympathy is all the more remarkable in Hume's thought given that he ultimately presents the sharing of passions and perspectives as impossible. Sympathy, as I noted earlier, begins with inference, which in turn depends on habit, a concept that plays a central role in Hume's thought. Hume's analysis of inference takes as its starting point a paradox: experience can teach us everything except that experience teaches—and yet without this assumption no learning from experience can occur (see Hume 1988 [1748], 39). "It is impossible," Hume notes, "that any arguments from experience can prove [the] resemblance of the past to the future; since all these arguments are founded on the supposition of that resemblance" (ibid., 39). Our observations alone are not enough to lead us to draw inferences about what has caused something to occur and what the effects of our actions might be.

What Hume calls the "real power of causes" lies not in the "things of nature" but in what Adela Pinch has usefully glossed as "the undefinable sense we have of our mind moving" (Pinch 1996, 36). *Habit* is Hume's name for the force that moves the mind in a particular direction. Habit directs the flow of the "fancy" across the imagination, which consists of ideas and relatively more vivid impressions imprinted by the things we perceive. This quote from Gilles Deleuze captures how habit works: "Like a sensitive plate, [the imagination] retains one case when the other appears. . . . When A appears, we expect B with a force corresponding to the qualitative impression of all the contracted [that is, previously

imprinted] ABs" (Deleuze 1994, 70).[5] We hear "tick" and we wait for "tock" with an intensity born of a lifetime of hearing clocks: this is the habit behind prophecy, more prosaic sorts of storytelling, and indeed any use of signs. (Deleuze goes even further: the organic itself is the habitual "expectation that 'it' will continue" and not simply the repeated action of a beating heart or dividing cell [ibid., 74].)[6]

The recourse to habit allows Hume to draw a distinction between the world and what we make of it without abandoning his commitment to the empirical. Inference turns on the projection of the force of habit outward onto the world. Sympathy turns on the re-creation of the sentiment of someone perceived as being in our vicinity, the idea of which "acquires such a degree of force and vivacity, as to become the very passion" (Hume 1962 [1738], 226). We can never witness causes, and we can never inhabit other minds. But the fiction that we can do both of these things arises from an experience that is real.

Hume's discussion of sympathy offers grounds for an approach to empire that is attentive to the material, affective force of interaction. To invent the artifices that shape their inferences, and hence their sentiments and inclinations, an official must sympathize with his subjects. And to sympathize he must infer.[7] This task is not easy for an official to do among people whose habitual tendencies differ from his own, as the record of Dutch state building in the New Guinea highlands makes abundantly clear. More to the point, as should become evident in my analysis of this record, in attempting this feat an official stakes his own sense of self. Sympathy is a process grounded in embodied interaction. As an analytic category, sympathy traffics in fiction: in the causes that the force of habit compels one to infer and in the passions that one guesses at and then feels. Sympathy also traffics in history: one's thoughts and feelings derive from an imagination that builds up expectations based on an embodied subject's singular pathway through the world. Above all, sympathy traffics in gradients of difference that blur given boundaries. Sympathy and all its ingredients vary by degree as opposed to kind: even the self is

simply that which is perceptually "close." Turned into a technology of Dutch state building, sympathy created the impression that officials could know and control what was going on in their native subjects' minds and hearts.

Other scholars have historicized Hume's writings (see, e.g., Koselleck 1988; Fosl 1993; Pinch 1996; Latour 1999; R. Mitchell 2007; C. Taylor 2007). I'm more interested in using Hume's concept of sympathy as a tool. In accounts of state building in the Wissel Lakes region, inferences attributed to others play a critical role in statecraft. Sympathies are extended and enlivened by inventions as ephemeral as a rumor or as durable as a fence. The empire emerges not only in the nested units of the census or the map but also as an awkward conglomeration of partial points of view. Influenced by the books they had read, the neighborhoods where they had lived, and the offices and barracks where they had worked, officials dispatched to the highlands expected and even sought out a particular experience of empire that in turn had concrete effects both on their actions and on the terms in which they described them. These descriptions sketched out an emergent culture of expertise, created as officials assessed one another's relations with the Papuans in defining and defending the sentiments that fueled their own work.[8]

Sympathy provided these officials with a means of pacifying that space of hospitality created by Dutch colonialism. It seemed to shield them against the threatening alterity that came in on the coattails of their Papuan hosts and guests. But it also created new problems. Officials found themselves sympathizing with natives whom they couldn't be sure they understood and on whom they were more dependent than they liked to admit. Here is where sympathetic state building left its mark on West Papua's history. Disturbed by the prospect of becoming too contiguous with the Papuans, these agents of empire combined a fantasy of familiarity with thoughts of the remote—that is, of an era lost in the distant Neolithic past. As we will see, the threat of proximity and the dream of the Stone Age went hand in hand.

Sympathy in the Stone Age

The period between Wissel's 1936 flight and the Japanese invasion of the highlands in 1942 was a critical moment in the highlands' opening. Reports written during this period, which were widely read by subsequent officials, played as central a role in state building as the practices they describe. My main source is de Bruijn, who wrote no fewer than five extensive reports in addition to a memoir and several journal articles on ethnographic and political questions. In one of these documents de Bruijn tells how he hung a bottle from a wooden beam after hoisting the Dutch flag in Zanepa, which, as we have seen, was the easternmost village he visited during his first expedition as chief of the post at Enarotali. "What was in it? Well, I'll let that be a surprise for the members of the next trip" (de Bruijn 1939a, 48). Munn's formulations alert us to the spatiotemporal effects aspired to in this passage. Here is the future brought into awareness as a horizon of the present. The report, the flag raising, and the letter in the bottle all participated in the same project: they enabled the official to make an impression—on paper, in the landscape, in local people's memories—legible to de Bruijn's successors as well as the bureaucrats who funded his post. Hume's formulations on governance are equally helpful in alerting us to the passions that writings like de Bruijn's report engineered. Here is but one example of the artifices that extend sympathy. No one came to New Guinea without being exposed to texts that brought the imperial project vividly to life—and gave them a sense of what to expect.

This definitely held for the writers of the reports I consider here. From J. G. Hides's *Through Wildest Papua* (1935) to M. Leahy and M. Crain's *The Land That Time Forgot* (1937), the 1930s saw an explosion of books in the English-language press recounting expeditions on the eastern half of the island. Focusing on the western half, the Dutch-language press followed suite. As a result of such texts, de Bruijn and his colleagues became acquainted with a presumption that informs travel writing on New Guinea

to this day: to visit this land was to go back in time. In popular accounts of previous expeditions to the interior, sympathy with the Stone Age Papuans was a prominent theme.

These officials sometimes cited H. J. T. Bijlmer's book (n.d.) on his experiences conducting anthropological research in the highlands. Bijlmer's account is filled with descriptions of intimate identification with the Papuans: the Papuans greeted old friends like the Dutch do, they responded to strange technology like the Dutch would; Bijlmer even saw what looked like Dutch faces in the Papuan crowds that gathered around his camp. In the spirit of de Bruijn's Moni friends, one highland leader told Bijlmer a legend that cast the visiting Europeans as long-lost "White Papuans" who had fled to "Soerabaya," that busy port on Java that, as we have seen, somehow became known in the highlands as "the place where all the threads between East and West come together and all contact with the Whites starts" (ibid., 83–84). Bijlmer himself accounted for the unexpected affinity he felt for his hosts by classifying the Papuans as the Caucasians' Stone Age ancestors, "survivals" descended from a racial missing link.

In Hume's terms, Bijlmer engaged in a fantasy of resemblance in the course of inferring the Papuans' feelings and thoughts, only to relegate his interlocutors to the past. Recall that for Hume the "vivacity" of an idea stems from both the contiguity and the resemblance we sense between ourselves and the person supposedly entertaining it. In fact, one could say that contiguity is a form of resemblance in which our coordinates in space and time are more or less like those of the other we observe. What Bijlmer does in his book is to translate spatiotemporal proximity into genealogical proximity. It is easier for Bijlmer to accept the Papuans as ancestors than as equals. He transforms an uncomfortable sharing of circumstances into a sharing of the genealogical "substance" that makes strangers into kin.[9] This was one way to derive a comforting pleasure from "first contact." Yet whereas Bijlmer's thoughts flew to the Stone Age, government officials found themselves forced to think ahead. Their task was not sim-

ply to make inferences about the Papuans but also to make the Papuans infer.

This imperative was captured in the instructions issued by the resident of Ambon in 1937 to the police commissioner, van Eechoud, who was assigned the task of building a post on Lake Paniai. "The goal of exploration is to strengthen and extend . . . peaceful contact with our authority." Van Eechoud was to undertake his duties with "kindness" and "humanity," using weapons only in times of dire need.[10] All the expedition members were to keep in mind that they were dealing with people who had had "no, or as good as no, contact with the outside world" and "attributed no, or almost no, powerful authority to their chiefs" and could hence be "suspicious" of our "regulations." "As a result of this, the most striking characteristic of this primitive people is their unpredictability following our concepts" (van Eechoud 1938, 4). For the administration to govern the territory effectively, officials needed to encourage its inhabitants to respond in a uniform fashion to the incursions that constituted "contact with our authority." At the same time, Dutch officials had to learn from more or less bitter experience how natives confronted with such incursions would react. Making the Papuans of the region predictable was a central aim of the reports penned by de Bruijn and his colleagues and of their conduct in the field.[11] But their approach to this task was not coldly rational, as we shall see.

Newly arrived officials quickly began collecting evidence of cultural or racial traits, consistent "causes" that would have "predictable" effects. Hume's account of inference seems particularly apropos. The force of habit led officials to believe that paths, people, and technologies would meet their expectations. But as I have suggested, little in the early expeditions went according to plan. Starting at sea level, van Eechoud had to get sufficient men and supplies to the lakes, and he had to convey them up a steep, exposed path over the range that divided the mountain valleys from the swampy flats around Oeta, a southern coastal settlement in what is now known as Mimika, after the area's domi-

nant Papuan group. He had to rely on Papuan coolies from these swampy flats, people who hated cold weather (and, presumably, grinding work) and tended to drop their loads and vanish into the wilderness whenever they got a chance.

Van Eechoud's radio went dead, and he had no way of knowing whether he would receive an airdrop of supplies once he reached the lakes. This question bore on how much food—and how many coolies—he needed to bring on the trip. In this context, the local inhabitants' "unpredictable responses" could have dire logistical consequences. Would van Eechoud be able to buy food from the Papuans? Would he find individuals willing to guide him where he wanted to go? As we saw in the previous chapter, the trick was to find welcoming hosts. The most basic preconditions of state building hung in the balance: officials needed to be able to eat, sleep, and avoid getting lost if any "contact," peaceful or otherwise, was to result.

Van Eechoud's initial experiences were not encouraging. In the end, out of a total of 300 coolies dispatched to follow van Eechoud's advance party with supplies, 286 deserted. As I reported earlier, local leaders who volunteered to serve as guides ended up leading the party to their own communities rather than to Enarotali, the designated site for the post.[12] When van Eechoud's advance party finally arrived in Enarotali, no airplane appeared. The party soon risked running short of the only variety of shells the people in Enarotali would accept in exchange for food.

No less than the officials, the Papuan groups and individuals who participated in these early interactions had their own good reasons to make particular demands. A wealth of ethnography from both sides of New Guinea has examined the role of exchange in the production of personhood and the dynamics of colonial contact (Bashkow 2006; Munn 1986; Schieffelin and Crittendon 1991; Stasch 2009; Strathern 1988; Weiner 1992). Elsewhere I have explored how a tendency among Biaks to valorize foreign things shaped their interactions with missionaries and officials (Rutherford 2003). Missionaries and officials sought

recognition of their authority from the Biaks they encountered at the same time that these Biaks sought valuables that would enhance their standing among their kin. The fact that the Wissel Lakes region's *tonowi*, or "big men," competed for authority on the basis of their ability to mobilize protégés, pigs, and shells undoubtedly had a role in van Eechoud's woes (see Pospisil 1958 and 1978; Giay 1995). In addition to the steep, slippery trails, the "partiality" of local perspectives made for a viscosity—an immobilizing friction—that the officer had to struggle to overcome. This partiality was a function of the distinct social and spatial positioning of different communities and individuals and their diverging obligations to intimate others. The Papuans' "unpredictability" and what Hume would call their "narrow" commitments made this landscape hard to traverse.

Survival was at stake in van Eechoud's ability to anticipate the Papuans' desires. But the task for van Eechoud and other officials was not simply to predict the Papuans' reactions but also, as I have suggested, to change them, by changing what Hume would call the Papuans' "situation." Dutch colonialism's "rule of experts" entailed the taking of censuses and the drawing of maps, as Timothy Mitchell (2002) would lead us to expect; but it also demanded the deliberate cultivation of new experiences among the ruled.

In an article written later, van Eechould proposed replacing shells with modern currency. The government should flood the market with shells, he argued, until they had so little value that the Papuans willingly gave them up. Van Eechoud applied a similar method in the case of "law and order." When local people sold pigs to van Eechoud, his troops always killed them with one of the firearms belonging to the expedition (see, e.g., van Eechoud 1938, 57). During the same period van Eechoud's counterparts on the Australian side of New Guinea held similar demonstrations during their patrols (see Westermark 2001, 51). In both cases this "custom" gave the onlookers a lesson in causality. Each animal's death was meant to lay the groundwork for incidents like one reported by Bijlmer in which a frightened teacher

managed to repel some Papuan attackers by mobilizing the force of habit. He cried out "Company!"—a term used by the Papuans to refer to the colonial government—then made the noise of a rifle, "Bang! Bang!" (Bijlmer n.d., 118). By cultivating new inferences among the Papuans, these officials encouraged them to view their homeland in novel ways.

Another police officer, R. R. Ravenswaaij Classen, shared van Eechoud's belief that the way to make the Papuans more predictable was to teach them what to predict, including the possibility of being killed by the police detachment's guns. As he relates in his report on the scientific expedition he was tasked with guarding, Ravenswaaij Classen was disturbed by the situation at the settlement at Enarotali, which was built on land belonging to the Ekari tribe. "August 5: The Ekari are a nuisance. They barge in everywhere, except my room, which I have declared forbidden territory for them, and if they see the chance take one or another little thing. . . . *It is high time to make these people understand that they have to do what they are told on our terrain*" (Ravenswaaij Classen 1939, 18).

In the same entry, Ravenswaaij Classen goes on to describe celebrating the birth of the new Dutch princess by enjoying some hot chocolate in the Marine barracks and singing one of the Dutch national anthems "at the top of our lungs in the heart of New Guinea." The officer's description of certain spaces as "ours" fits hand in glove with his designation of certain events as coordinated with distant happenings. Not only did this small piece of real estate become imaginable as Dutch; so did the day's events, brought into conjunction with a royal biography-in-the-making through the simple expedient of cocoa and song. Colonial officials produced imperial spacetime through such ceremonies and through "inventions" like the rifle demonstrations, which extended Dutch sovereignty one "forbidden territory" at a time. State building entailed both coercion and the building up of new apprehensions: "to make these people understand that they have to do what they are told" on what the Papuans were supposed to recognize as "our"—that is, Dutch—"terrain." Not an easy task:

as we have seen, the Ekari were in the habit of believing that this "terrain" was actually theirs.

Above all, the production of colonial spacetime required the promotion of sympathy between officials and the mountain Papuans. The Papuans had to see themselves through the eyes of outsiders to imagine inhabiting a bounded territory, and they had to recall events of benevolence and coercion to be convinced of the empire's power. In turn, the agents of empire had to imagine the world from a Papuan perspective in order to design incentives that would reform Papuan ways. At the same time, their own actions had to become predictable to the Papuans to enable the Papuans to react in predictable ways.

This strategy was not without risk. Ravenswaaij Classen fumed after describing how a volley of arrows sent his soldiers running: "It is forbidden to use violence, but in this manner we lose our prestige. . . . What an impression must yet another retreat make on these natives now!" (1939, 23). The police officer responded to the setback by staging a weapons demonstration near the unfriendly village: "Alas, the very first cartridges I shot included three duds and two slow burners. It was not a pretty outcome, and I felt myself and my figure properly demeaned in front of both the expedition members and the Ekaris" (ibid., 23).

"Properly demeaned": the incident raised a specter conjured by Hume when he argues that "the self independent of the perception of every other object, is in reality nothing" (Hume 1962 [1738], 242; Pinch 1996, 23). With all the broken radios, disrupted supply lines, and air drops that failed to occur, these officials often felt betrayed by trusted objects—and they often felt like fools. Officials depended on these technologies to carry out their mission and to provide evidence of their superiority over their Papuan subjects. In their effort to cause these natives to draw new inferences about the world and the forces that prevailed in it, they had no choice but to see themselves as they thought Papuans saw them. Putting themselves in the Papuans' shoes, while following a line of reasoning that read a forecast of tomorrow's responses in the impressions left today, proved unsettling

for officials whose prestige rested on their distance from those they ruled. Sympathy could bring officials too close for comfort with the natives: no longer at arm's length, the Papuans posed a challenge to Europeans trying to keep their identity pure (see Rutherford 2012b).

But officials risked more than embarrassment when they sympathized with the Papuans. In getting close enough to trade perspectives, they confronted uncomfortable moral demands. This was particularly the case for de Bruijn, the General's traveling companion, who was less concerned about the Papuans' respect for firearms than about their affection for the empire they had just joined. His writings show us how sympathy could spill over into a more familiar form of empathy as a result of the interactions that state building entailed.

De Bruijn, who was the controller in Enarotali during Ravenswaaij Classen's visit, also had reform in mind and tried very hard to put himself in Papuan shoes. Yet his strategy for "making an impression" on the Papuans was at odds with that of Ravenswaaij Classen. Unlike the commissioner, who put up a fence around the expedition he was guarding, the controller made a point of sharing space with the mountain Papuans whenever he could.[13] Unlike other officials, de Bruijn didn't order the locals to come to him. Rather, as we saw in the previous chapter, he went to them—often with them—taking long exploratory trips in which he enjoyed the company of not only local guides and bearers but also their friends and family, leading entire villages, Pied Piper–like, over hill and dale. As de Bruijn saw it, cohabitation was a crucial phase in state building. After sharing a bed with his guide, Soalekigi, de Bruijn remarked, only half joking, "What's a few fleas for the sake of good understanding between [Soalekigi's clan] and the Government" (1939b, 23). De Bruijn's writings reveal the rivalry that emerged between different experts in this setting as to whose form of sympathy was best suited to the task of state building. Indeed, it is by virtue of the dynamics brought to light by this rivalry that this case proves so revealing of aspects of colonial practice that might otherwise pass unremarked.

De Bruijn, like his colleagues, inferred what the Papuans thought and felt in a concerted attempt to engineer the Papuans' inferences and extend their sympathies. His writings illuminate the contingent consequences of this process, given the inevitably credulous nature of Dutch inferences about what made the Papuans tick. His interventions provided fodder for the Papuans' interpretations, which were fueled by their own historically constituted habits of feeling and thought. In the zone created by this meeting of imaginations, new customs and passions emerged.

Facilitating this outcome were Papuan middlemen like Soalekigi, experts in their own right who, one will recall, became known as *ogai* or "foreigners" because they "walked with" the Dutch. Like the General, Soalekigi had received a trip to a coastal administrative center as a reward for helping one of the officials who opened the highlands. Involving a plane ride and plentiful gifts, this visit had introduced Soalekigi to the empire to which he now belonged. Armed with privileged knowledge of "the people from Soerabaya," Soalekigi became a key transmitter in what de Bruijn called the "mountain Papuan information service." During his first trip with de Bruijn, Soalekigi spread word of the controller's impending arrival, ensuring that the expedition received a warm welcome along the way. In this way he set in play an emerging genre of interaction in which singing and dancing villagers greeted the travelers, led them to a good campsite, then plied them with cane, tubers, and pigs (1939a, 41).

In one valley, people wanted malaria medicine as an elixir against mortality. In another, someone asked de Bruijn to perform a rite to prevent disease, and he made one up involving a piglet and a prayer (1939a, 25; 1941, 14). De Bruijn found these incidents reassuring; they reflected the people's "touching faith" in "our power" (1941, 85). De Bruijn likewise found Soalekigi's interpretation of their close "friendship" reassuring, reporting with evident pleasure on Soalekigi's belief that de Bruijn was the "reincarnation" of his dead younger brother, who had been tall "like a Soerabaya person" and very kind (1939c, 12; Rhys 1947, 138–39).[14]

So eager was de Bruijn to "enliven," as Hume might put it, the

Papuans' sympathy for him, and by extension the government, that he took pleasure in proximity with his subjects. De Bruijn found his reincarnation as Papuan more reassuring than contaminating, given the officer's belief that this impression was but one step in the gradual process through which these primitive natives would become ready for the "fully administered" period of colonial rule (Rhys 1947, 28). Under these conditions Dutch prestige could even survive de Bruijn's falling face down in the mud, as long as "good understanding" ensued. After de Bruijn took a tumble off a slippery pair of tree trunks, Soalekigi's wives rushed to his aid. They "apparently felt deep sympathy with me and stroked me under the chin, which was a remarkable sensation" (de Bruijn 1939a, 36). For de Bruijn, such "remarkable sensations" served as a diagnostic for the progress of state building. De Bruijn's reports are filled with accounts both of touching encounters—like the one described above—and of episodes that revealed how deeply he felt that certain Papuans had been touched.

During de Bruijn's final expedition with Soalekigi, which took him far to the east of the lakes, de Bruijn participated in the courtship parties that became the "customary" way in which people in this valley celebrated de Bruijn's arrival. As de Bruijn hummed along to the love songs and passed out gifts, "suddenly Soalekigi began to sob, upon which some other people began immediately to blubber with him."

> When I asked what was up, Soalekigi, who was moved, answered that he was crying because I was like one from out of his midst. The roads here were no "Soerabaya roads" but muddy paths, and yet I had trekked them despite the hill, sludge, and discomforts to the east, just like the mountain dwellers; I ate sweet potatoes, just like the mountain dwellers, I slept in the mountain dwellers' huts, just as he himself did, and now I was taking part in the [feast] . . . just like a mountain Papuan. I didn't know Soalekigi was a philosopher! He seems to understand better than the "Soerabaya people," who have very well asked me what I see in this exploring, why I have never once asked for a "good" posting. Ask Soalekigi, and you will understand, Soerabaya person! (de Bruijn 1941, 26)

Here is "sympathy" in its purest form: the official treks, eats, sleeps, and courts "just like a mountain Papuan." De Bruijn even writes in a mountain Papuan voice, addressing his reader as a "Soerabaya person" rather than as a fellow "White." For a moment de Bruijn's perspective merges with Soalekigi's. This is what the official sees in "this exploring": the reward of becoming "like one out of [Soalekigi's] midst."

At the same time, ever so gently, de Bruijn repels the threat that such experiences posed to the racial hierarchy that justified the colonial project. As de Bruijn sees it, what moves Soalekigi is the Papuan's awareness that the Dutch official actually belongs in a far loftier cultural world. As a mixed-race Dutchman during a time when the Indo-European community's fortunes were in decline, de Bruijn would have been sensitive to any challenge to his place in this hierarchy. As his biographer suggests, this "Doctor of Literature and Philosophy" took care to present himself as an avatar of civilization: a "polished student, imbued with intellect, knowledge, poetic feeling, a lover of the arts, in love with life" (Rhys 1947, 13, 90).[15] And yet despite this factor in his biography, de Bruijn took pride in his ability to be "mistaken" for a Stone Age native. Recall the episode at the start of this essay. De Bruijn gently made fun of Kigimoejakigi when he named him the General. But he describes his own ability to live like a native as moving his companions to tears.

That de Bruijn's account is self-congratulatory is undeniable. The very pride that de Bruijn took in sympathizing with the Papuans indicates how far the official felt he had to travel to enter their "Neolithic" milieu. As I noted above, Bijlmer, the Dutch scientist, defused such moments of identification by imagining his surroundings as a sort of Stone Age theme park. Eons of civilization separated the doctor from the Papuans, however close they seemed to come. De Bruijn, by contrast, responded to the moral challenges of the situation by envisioning his interlocutors as future beneficiaries of an empire that would master this "neglected" land. During another trip, de Bruijn met with the families of two men who had died of malaria while accompanying

him to the coast. Deeply moved by their loved ones' willingness to forgive him, de Bruijn remarked, "If I ever lost these people's trust, I would ask for a transfer without hesitation" (1939c, 12). De Bruijn viewed the deaths as a sacrifice made on behalf of the empire, akin to the many sacrifices "of persons and goods" made by "our forefathers," who worked hard despite the "uncertainty of success . . . to make the Indies what it is today" (1939c, 14). The way to repay the Papuans for the cost of governance turned out to be more governance; keeping the Papuans' trust entailed extending Dutch sovereignty throughout the land.

De Bruijn had abundant evidence that his presence had made an impression on the Papuans; but he worried intensely about whether his reports would make enough of an impression on his superiors to motivate them to complete the task he had begun. In these reports de Bruijn constantly called on his readers not to "abandon [the district] to oblivion" (1941, 85). Without the fiction of an expanding empire providing a horizon for his interactions with the Papuans, de Bruijn and other officials might have found themselves feeling obliged to repay the Papuans in their own coin. In other words, de Bruijn and his colleagues would have faced the specter of actually becoming "White Papuans," rather than the Papuans becoming Dutch subjects who happened to be brown. Thinking of all the pigs his traveling companion had procured for him, de Bruijn was "deeply ashamed" when one of his colleagues on the coast refused to give Soalekigi some chickens (de Bruijn 1939c, 15). De Bruijn follows his description of this incident with a tirade on the government's responsibility to compensate the Papuans for their loyalty by taking control of their land. By placing this failed exchange in the context of a far more grandiose transaction, de Bruijn managed to forget the degree to which his very survival in the highlands turned on his inferring and adopting what Hume would call his companions' "narrow" point of view.

De Bruijn's voice is distinctive, but it was not an aberration. At the time that de Bruijn and his colleagues wrote, the archive of colonial knowledge available to officials in Dutch New Guinea

consisted entirely of writings of this style. The reports of de Bruijn and his colleagues reveal an empire held together by artifice, inference, but above all sympathy. They illuminate unruly moments of contagion in which sympathy elevated and demeaned imperial selves. Papuans today still have to grapple with the ambivalent aftereffects of Dutch colonialism. Dutch colonialism wrenched control of New Guinea from the hands of its indigenous inhabitants. But it also gave birth to Papuan nationalism, and many Papuans remember the Dutch in a rosy light. In their speeches and writings, supporters of Papuan independence from Indonesia have had recourse to the Stone Age image of New Guinea. But so have apologists for the Indonesian government's brutal efforts to "civilize" the Papuans. This image's resilience owes much to the episodes of state building described in this chapter. In Dutch New Guinea, as elsewhere, the experience of empire left a vivid impression that had lasting effects.

Getting Too Close

For those of us who study the imperial situation, it is important to avoid viewing sympathy as proof of the colonizers' good intentions. But it is equally important to avoid turning sympathy into a fleeting sign of imperialism subverting itself from within. Vicente Rafael has written of the "fundamental and . . . *enabling* ambivalence of the colonial encounter whereby the colonizer imagines herself sliding into the position of the colonized" (Rafael 2000, 62). In the cases Rafael examines, this "sliding" appears as a regrettable slip, something that might happen when a European looked out the window and found a "racial other" looking in. Like those instances in which Europeans felt they were being mimicked or mocked, such moments brought into play what Homi Bhabha (1994) calls the "ambivalence of colonial discourse." Defenders of empire insisted both on the difference between the colonizers and the colonized and on the never-ending process of "civilization" that would close this gap. By contrast, in the Wissel Lakes, that space of colonial violence and hospitality,

sympathy with the natives was more than a symptom or a means of coping with the contradictions of colonial identity; rather, it was an indispensable component of colonial rule.[16]

The colonizers I have described "slid" on company time, as it were, and their ambivalence enabled the colonial project in ways far more direct than Rafael's analysis might lead us to expect. Sympathy was a double-edged sword for Dutch officials. Identification with the Stone Age Papuans served as a tool of state building, even as an excessive proximity with the natives could call their prestige into question. The outcome was productive and not just subversive. Humiliation could fuel an empire's growth, when it compelled officials to redouble their efforts to take control. This was especially the case in places where the empire's agents had reason to fear that others might challenge their claim to sovereignty, such as the setting I have described here.[17]

An analysis of Dutch officials' experience of empire helps us account for why western New Guinea's postwar history has unfolded in the peculiar manner it has. Van Eechoud and de Bruijn played a central role in the 1950s, one will recall, when western New Guinea went from being the Netherlands Indies' most "neglected" territory to the Netherlands' final foothold in Asia,. De Bruijn's exploits as a spy during the Japanese Occupation made him famous. Dutch and English readers would have heard the description of how he remained at large with the help, as he put it, of "50,000 friends" (Rhys 1947, 120). Van Eechoud also became known for his heroism after the war. The Allies chose him as the first head of the Netherlands Indies Colonial Authority in New Guinea after MacArthur retook the island from the Japanese.

Van Eechoud's first posting was on Biak Island, which became the gateway to Netherlands New Guinea after the war. De Bruijn later served on Biak, too, as a chief government official who experimented with indigenous "democratic" institutions well before the early 1960s, when the Dutch began to move toward Papuan self-rule (see de Bruijn 1965). But van Eechoud's record with the Papuans is remembered as even more impressive. Dubbed "the father of the Papuans" by his protégés, the former police

commissioner founded a Papuan battalion and then a school for civil servants that trained many early Papuan nationalists (Derix 1987). Some of the first members of the Papuan battalion were veterans of de Bruijn's "bodyguard," which included Soalekigi's nephews, nieces, and sons (Rhys 1947, 130, 135, 204).

The Netherlands' postwar retention of western New Guinea was an expensive luxury, both financially and diplomatically. Some historians have suggested that the new colony acted as a "fetish" for Dutch colonials, who felt "traumatized" by the Indies' loss (Lijphart 1966). The notion that colonization was a "return gift" to the Papuans, whom the Dutch would prepare to rule their own nation-state, harked back to similar defenses of Dutch rule in the Indies. At the turn of the twentieth century, politicians in the Netherlands had argued that it was only "ethical" that the Dutch should repay this land that had yielded such wealth through development programs that exposed the natives to the so-called benefits of modern life (see Locher-Scholten 1981). In 1945, when Indonesia declared independence, transferring this civilizing mission from the Indies at large to New Guinea in particular proved an alluring idea to many. In this "primitive" territory Dutch colonialism could continue unabated. Natives barely emerging from the Stone Age would need Dutch tutelage for many generations to come. The Stone Age Papuan was arguably "only evidence in a debate, the importance of which surpasses not only his understanding but also his very existence" (Trouillot 1991, 33). Yet concrete dilemmas connected to the circumstances of colonial state building are what gave this figure such a grip on Dutch minds.

It is tempting to claim that van Eechoud's and de Bruijn's experiences in the Wissel Lakes were responsible for their role in promoting this vision of the Netherlands'"duty" in New Guinea. These officials arguably became addicted to the "remarkable sensation" of sympathizing with the Stone Age Papuans, which left them with a thirst for grandeur and a sense of indebtedness to their helpers, which they projected onto the population writ large. In tracking these causal chains, we find ourselves engaged

in a form of empirical reasoning not unlike that which these officials shared with Hume. In his study of Hume, Gilles Deleuze points out that most scholars have defined empiricism as "the theory according to which knowledge (1) not only begins in experience, but (2) is derived from it" (1991 [1953], 107). But Hume's empiricism, as I have argued, is more about doing than knowing, including the doing that is knowing, if we assume that to think is both to be acted on and to act. The things of the world, including others' actions, impress themselves on the imagination. The mind experiences its own powers as external causes, including the imperatives that propel others to act. Acting, the mind is acted on, yet again, in reproducing the passions that others are taken to display. Only in this fictive, roundabout, yet material way do people build up together the spatiotemporal frames and horizons of expectation that result from and shape their practices. To understand the long-term impact of Dutch officials' experience of state building, we need to sympathize—to squeeze ourselves into their shoes—which means taking seriously the texts they read and the landscapes through which they passed. We need to get close enough to catch their passions while we infer what caused them to do what they did.

The story I have told thus circles back from the sentiments of Dutch officials to the sentiments of anthropologists. Sympathy is our stock in trade, no less than it was for van Eechoud and de Bruijn. I am far from the first to suggest that the resemblance between anthropological and colonial methods should make us queasy—that is, viscerally unbalanced—in response to an unsettling proximity not unlike that experienced by the officials I have described.[18] We can respond to this feeling by softening our claims and insisting that our truths are only partial.[19] We can switch to topics seemingly divorced from imperial fields of power.[20] Yet if we anthropologists are complicit with the colonizers by virtue of our embodied practices, and not simply our privileged positioning, we cannot escape this dilemma as easily as we might presume. We are still engaged in ethnography—an "ethnography of the archive"—when we investigate the produc-

tion of our colonial predecessors' own ethnographic "facts" (see Dirks 2000, 175).

As the Dutch use of sympathy for the purpose of mastering the Papuans makes clear, there are more or less ethically and epistemologically responsible ways of inhabiting another's viewpoint. The best demand a certain piety before difference and an openness to the possibility of surprise. The worst refuse from the outset to risk contagion by others who are not, as de Bruijn might put it, "just like us": skinheads, televangelists, weapons scientists, and, yes, colonial officials, those who dominate as well as those under their thumbs.[21] No one can fully share someone else's "circumstances"—indeed, no one fully occupies his or her own—yet the effort to do so is what defines human beings as social creatures. This paradox is an empirical reality for our discipline. Through the experience of fieldwork, we learn firsthand about the force of habit, the imprinting of the imagination, and the making and breaking of frames and horizons, not to mention the fictions on which every relationship turns. To the extent that we take all this seriously, anthropology is more empirical than social sciences that take positivism as their creed.[22]

We will return to this question of the relationship of sympathy and anthropology later in this book. But our next task is to consider yet another player in this drama: technology, which was a source of power, pleasure, and anxiety for the Dutch and the Papuans alike.

FIGURE 6. Ekari Papua men beside a Catalina amphibian plane of the Royal Dutch Navy at the Wissel Lakes. May 1950. National Museum of World Cultures. Coll. no. TM-10009699.

part 2

Vulnerability and Fantasies of Mastery

3

Technological Passions

From sympathy to technology: the leap is not as long as one might think. In the previous chapter I recounted episodes from the colonial archive focused on a technology of a particular sort. Sympathy, I suggested, was a tool of governance for officials in New Guinea. This sentiment was a working component in an apparatus: the Dutch colonial government, which was built of buildings, fountain pens, steamships, and canoes, as well as habituated bodies and minds. At the same time, sympathy was also a threat to this apparatus: bringing Dutch officials into imagined proximity to the Papuans, it challenged the racial hierarchy that justified Dutch rule.

But technology also figures in this story in a more pedestrian form. Western New Guinea's imagined dearth of technology singled it out for special treatment: its Stone Age inhabitants needed continued Dutch tutelage to enter the modern world. This conceit was not simply dreamed up in The Hague, nor was it without a certain irony. We see it articulated in memoirs and trip reports that are filled with evidence that the Dutch themselves were scarcely masters of their machines. Charged with extending Dutch sovereignty into New Guinea's interior in the 1930s, officials found themselves at the mercy not only of local communities but also of technology, a term I use in a sense that

extends from objects and organized practices to crafted muscles and nerves. They responded by producing an image of the territory that justified continued Dutch rule. In this chapter I explore some of the passions that arose when these officials' dependence on technology came into view: passions that registered this threat to their autonomy and passions that made them a cog in their own wheels.

With Machete and Compass through New Guinea, the memoir of one such official, was born of a particular passion: jealousy, which can eat you up. It certainly ate up the author, Jan van Eechoud, the so-called father of the Papuans (see Derix 1987; see also Drooglever 2005; Rutherford 2009). Van Eechoud was a policeman by training, from a humble background. In addition to serving in the Wissel Lakes, he led a series of other expeditions along the Rouffaer and Mamberamo Rivers, two major watersheds on Dutch New Guinea's northern coast.

As I have noted, van Eechoud was a war hero, an accomplished administrator, and a vocal proponent of the Dutch retention of New Guinea. Yet despite the fact he had already acted as the territory's chief administrator for the Allies, he did not become the governor of the new self-standing colony of Netherlands New Guinea. Instead the job went to S. L. J. van Waardenburg, a high-ranking Indies bureaucrat with little New Guinea experience who had been van Eechoud's direct superior during the old colony's final days.[1] Van Eechoud, who still headed up the civil service, hated serving under the new governor. In 1950 he urged Dutch leaders to fire van Waardenburg and hire him instead. The scheme backfired, and van Eechoud was pushed into early retirement. As the Dutch historian Piet Drooglever puts it, "Van Eechoud was eaten up by jealousy, and he let it show" (2005, 255).

Van Eechoud did not go quietly. He published *With Machete and Compass* in 1953, three years after returning to the Netherlands (Drooglever 2005, 256). Chronicling van Eechoud's travels in the interior during the late 1930s and early 1940s, the memoir pits capabilities cultivated in the colonial headquarters against the habits, skills, and sensibilities born of experience in the field.

But in staging this rivalry, van Eechoud reveals another critical set of players: the hybrid network of actors that made it possible for him to undertake the expeditions described in the book.

Edwin Hutchins (1996) and Bruno Latour (2005) have argued that what we think of as human agency, which in Hutchins's case includes an individual's capacity to think, is in fact distributed among objects and people. Hutchins's study of aircraft carrier navigation is especially revealing: cognition depends on storage media, social relationships, and many other things that lie outside the limits of an individual brain. In the pages that follow I deploy an expanded understanding of sovereignty that shows why this distribution might appear as a threat. Jacques Derrida described how those who pursue sovereignty posit an impossible "ipseity" or self-sameness. In attempting to extirpate any relationship to objects and others, would-be sovereigns attack their own conditions of possibility (see Derrida 2005 and 2009). Van Eechoud was motivated to write his memoir by his rivalry with van Waardenberg. But in the course of recalling his experiences in the highlands, he brought to light additional challenges to his authority. Van Eechoud's confrontation with his own dependence on what I will call the trekking machine propelled him into a jealous pursuit of supremacy over a territory, over his inferiors, and over himself.

But jealousy wasn't the only sentiment at work in this setting. By reading van Eechoud's memoir with an eye to the range of feelings it expresses, I hope to shed light on the affective processes at the heart of Dutch colonial state building. Alongside descriptions of technology, *With Machete and Compass* is filled with descriptions of the passions inspired by van Eechoud's dependence on nonhuman things. Some approximate what Brian Massumi has called "affect" or "intensity": the deeply corporeal feeling of having a feeling (2002, 28). Feelings appear in the memoir as "intensity qualified," if always incompletely, in a way that serves van Eechoud's ends. Some passions give rise to pleasurable customs: the repetitive practices through which van Eechoud becomes part of the trekking machine.[2] Moments of

surprise, embarrassment, and pain become the fodder for habit, which yields enjoyment as well as expertise. Other feelings fuel assertions of sovereignty when van Eechoud seeks to redeem himself in the eyes of his companions by insisting on his capacity to act. In the end, passions become instruments in the civilizing process, as van Eechoud uses what he imagines to be others' feelings about his tools as means of restoring the colonial order. But his memoir makes one thing clear: van Eechoud might have tried to use technologies and the feelings associated with them for the purpose of state building, but he was never completely in control of either his passions or his machines.

Let me lay out the steps in my argument. Van Eechoud's aim in writing his memoir was to show that he was more qualified to govern Netherlands New Guinea than his Dutch rival was. He attempted this by insisting on everything he had learned from his extended exposure to Papuan worlds. As van Eechoud describes it, this was an impassioned form of training that worked on the body as much as the mind. But in laying claim to high office, van Eechoud bumped up against a dilemma. By his own measure, the people most qualified to rule New Guinea were the Papuans themselves. In the end, modern technology came to the rescue. The compass allowed van Eechoud to maintain a sense of control over his movements, while the machete, which was widely coveted in New Guinea, allowed him to imagine he could understand the Papuans' intentions and fulfill their desires. But I am jumping ahead in the story. Let's begin at the start.

Into an Empty Land

It is hard to read *With Machete and Compass* without thinking of van Eechoud's sad bureaucratic fate. The book begins with a passage that takes us through the day in 1906 that the Dutch explorers Lorentz and van Nouhuys completed the final leg of their ascent of Mt. Wilhelmina. On top of New Guinea's snow-capped giant, they were greeted with an unexpected sight of populated valleys and hills. That night, van Eechoud reports, van Nouhuys

wrote these lines, adapted from Rudyard Kipling's poem "The Explorer," in his journal:

> And "no sense in going further"
> Til I crossed the range to see.
> Anybody *might* have found it.
> But its whisper came to me. (van Eechoud 1953, 6)[3]

Van Nouhoys experienced his discovery not as an accomplishment but as a gift. "At such moments, all fatigue and deprivation is forgotten," van Eechoud observes, writing of his compatriot. "Then one's heart is full, not with fame and glory or gold and profit, but 'because my price is paid me ten times over by my Maker'" (van Eechoud 1953, 7). Van Eechoud contrasts these explorers' gratitude with the arrogance of "clever chaps" who refused to give credit where credit was due. These included men, implicitly like van Waardenburg and other Indies bureaucrats, who "thought that their experience elsewhere would also enable them to succeed here" (ibid., 7). In Australian New Guinea, van Eechoud tells us, "fifty tough, hardened blokes, accustomed to rambling through the wilderness," decided to travel from the coast to the highlands, where gold had just been discovered. "A 3,000 meter mountain range didn't scare them off, and they laughed at the warnings of those who knew more of this land and its jungle. Not one of them was ever heard from again" (ibid.). The "blokes" got attacked by unseen bowmen, they got sick, they got hungry, and, above all, they got lost. These men's belief that New Guinea had nothing to teach them cost them their lives. Van Eechoud's memoir recounts how he not only avoided death but also emerged triumphant from his ordeals, by accepting the gifts New Guinea had to offer: the "New Guinea Years" that turned an incompetent newcomer into someone who instinctively knew just what to do.

Van Eechoud began his New Guinea years at a time when the island was attracting increasing attention, thanks in part to the discovery of gold in the east and oil in the west. In 1937 van Eechoud was serving as police commissioner for northern Dutch

New Guinea when he received an order to lead an expedition. Van Eechoud's brief was to chart a new route from the coast to the Meervlakte ("Lake Plain"), the vast, flat valley of the Rouffaer River that had been "discovered" in 1915.[4] This region was inhabited by so-called wild Papuans who paid no colonial taxes and used stone tools. Van Eechoud used a military metaphor to provide a vivid description of the purpose of the exercise. "Despite bombardment, shelling, and the application of all modern attack methods, a land is only occupied when the infantry enters it," he noted (van Eechoud 1953, 7–8). When it came to New Guinea's occupation, the aerial mapping then being undertaken by mining and petroleum interests was not enough.

The on-the-ground approach to state building endorsed by van Eechoud was not only strategic; it was also addictive, as his memoir makes clear: "And for the explorers, there are thereby temptingly beautiful trips on the agenda: quick passes through unknown lands inhabited by unknown tribes, trips in which there would be something to experience! Moreover, no tedious routine work would follow after the trip, but only the writing of a report and . . . another trip!" (van Eechoud 1953, 11). The Meervlakte expedition was van Eechoud's first trip to the interior, and it did indeed offer him "something to experience": adventure, which van Eechoud quotes the dictionary to define as "something unusual, unexpected, and peculiar that happens to someone" (ibid., 8).

In van Eechoud's description of the expedition, the unusual, unexpected, and peculiar ends up residing in the technology of travel: what I am calling the trekking machine. Travel into the interior required supplies: canteens, pots and pans, pistols, rifles, cameras, blankets, tarps, food, and "contact articles" like axes, cloth, and beads. It required compasses and machetes to chart the course and clear the way, and native coolies and police agents to carry and protect all this stuff. It required assistance from the natural environment: from river currents that could propel a canoe but also capsize it, from trees that could hold a platform for taking compass readings but also block the view. Finally, travel into the interior required know-how, from the ability to identify

edible plants to an awareness of when the so-called wild Papuans were most likely to attack. "I can lead this expedition," an official might have said. But this "I" that "can" was merely a stand-in for a variegated network of people and things.

For van Eechoud these people included Wuwung, Van Eechoud's second-in-command, who hailed from Menado, a Christian area in North Sulawesi. Wuwung headed up a multiethnic troop of Javanese, Ambonese, and Menadonese police agents stationed in a riverside settlement near the coast.[5] (Later van Eechoud would work extensively with Sitanala, a junior government assistant [Dutch: *hulpbestuursassistant*] from Ambon, who became fluent in the various languages spoken around the Wissel Lakes [Vlaasboom 2004, 98].) Taking charge of the preparations, Wuwung recruited Papuan coolies from the surrounding Waropen villages to serve as bearers.[6] Van Eechoud spills much ink on these different native groups' skills. The coastal Papuans brought with them know-how gained on previous trips. On the first day of hiking, the "smart ones" paid careful attention as Wuwung and the police agents divided the materials into loads. They "had surreptitiously tried on the loads and had an eye on the lightest ones" (van Eechoud 1953, 21).[7] To lighten his load, a coolie on van Eechoud's expedition punched a hole in the coconut oil canister that he was carrying. A Papuan coolie on another expedition systematically dumped out the samples collected by a traveling geologist, thinking that no one would be the wiser if he replaced them with rocks from the final campsite on the route.

But the Papuan coolies, like the police agents, also possessed more constructive kinds of knowledge. Consider this description of camp building:

> The procedure is always the same: I give the sign and indicate the place for the camp; then Wuwung swings into action. He immediately divides the coolies into little groups and, with a pair of words, gives them their specific task, which everyone already indeed knows. Wuwung himself measures out the places for the holes for the posts with his *klewang* [a machetelike sword]: so many klewang long, so many wide—and one speedily sees the first form of the camp ap-

> pear from a chaos of thick and thin, long and short little branches. Up swings the ridge beam and the roof joists are laid. Tens of hands place the rattan ties, tens bring the little sticks for the floor covering. Still others in the meantime carry large nibung leaves, which are used not only for sleeping places but also as protection against incoming rain. In a very short time everyone begins to spread their little bed and do their cooking.
>
> Wood, rattan, leaves: the Papuans do everything with these, but the police agents no less. That will say, the old hands among them.[8] (van Eechoud 1953, 30)

Most of these police agents were "sturdy, strong fellows; tough, trained, and entirely at home in the woods; acquainted with everything that lives and grows and with the way it is to be used. They compared favorably with their colleagues, who had enjoyed police training with theory and practice on Java, but despite this in the woods were all fingers and thumbs" (van Eechoud 1953, 30).[9] Taking a swipe at his desk-bound rivals, van Eechoud sketches out a hierarchy in which more experience in New Guinea equals more expertise. This line of reasoning could lead to a disquieting conclusion. Those best qualified to rule New Guinea might well be the island's most experienced residents: the wild Papuans themselves.

To defeat his Dutch competitor and put the threat posed by the Papuans out of mind, van Eechoud had to climb a steep learning curve. Affects loomed large in the pedagogical process through which van Eechoud rose within the ranks of capable subjects. Instead of simply learning procedures, van Eechoud acquired expertise through his embodied reactions to the painful experiences he endured. "Really, when you are first in the jungle, you have new experiences every day. Every day imperceptibly teaches you something. This knowledge accumulates over the course of years and later you can't tell anymore how you got it. Only unusual happenings remain hanging in your memory, like my first wasp attack" (van Eechoud 1953, 37). Here he is referring to an incident in which he "learned his lesson" while clearing brush: one must look for hives before hacking down a bush.[10] On

the one hand, experience taught van Eechoud "imperceptibly." On the other hand, it stung him like a wasp.[11]

The process of rising through the ranks of capable subjects also entailed becoming a more effective component of the trekking machine. Experience spawned what van Eechoud called "customs": things necessary to the trekking machine's function that he took pleasure in always doing the same way. Note how, in describing this process, van Eechoud uses the "nomic voice," a grammatical construction that signals the generalizable—that is, "customary"—nature of what is described. Van Eechoud's nomic "you" or "one" is often implicitly the typical traveling Dutch official, although it can also include the typical Papuan coolie, signaling how habits can cross racial boundaries. (In one remarkable passage, van Eechoud explains what "you" should do if you want to use witchcraft to make someone sick.) When van Eechoud writes in this way, it is often to show how customs emerge from uncomfortable and distressing affective states. You are startled to find a bug in your shoe; you develop the custom of shaking out your footwear before putting it on. You burn your mouth on an aluminum camp mug; you learn to let the mug cool before taking a sip.

With repetition, experience makes certain tasks come naturally, and the routine begins to seep pleasantly through the pores. With time, van Eechoud came to savor the pleasures of the trekking machine: sun on your back, a cool river on your legs, a mouthful of steaming coffee, a lungful of smoke. "I always found the midday break on patrol very pleasurable," he writes.

> You usually take it between 11 and 12, but you preferably wait until you come upon a nice spot. It is always especially enticing to stop at a river, especially if there is a place with some sun. You sit deliciously on a rock with your legs in the cool mountain water up to your knees and quickly feel the heat in your body, smoldering above all after a heavy climb, give way to a pleasant coolness. You quench your thirst by bringing the crystal-clear water to your mouth in your hands, and after the sweat is no longer dripping down your face you can really enjoy a cigarette and some coffee from your canteen. (van Eechoud 1953, 41–42)

In passages such as these van Eechoud explains how his pains and pleasures transformed him into an effective component of the trekking machine by way of an embodied penchant for the habitual. Not only does van Eechoud claim to have experienced these things; he claims that this experience taught him what experience can do. Experience transforms van Eechoud into a component of his own technology: the organized set of persons and instruments that enables his party to move across the land. In this sense van Eechoud's passions are technological: they are both inspired by his exposure to the tools of his trade and effective components of an apparatus of rule.

But as I have suggested, these technological passions could also pose a threat, especially when the trekking machine hit a rut. Elsewhere in his memoir van Eechoud shows how his pains and pleasures could alert the Dutch official to his vulnerability. During the first part of the journey, van Eechoud and his companions had to cross an endless series of steep ravines:

> A little after eleven, around the time for the long midday rest, we were halfway up a long rise, on a flat bit about ten by ten meters in size. My heart had it bad again and I saw between the trees that the hill was becoming even steeper.
>
> My courage gave out. Curtly I said to the agents in my vicinity, "Make camp here," lay flat on my back, and closed my eyes. A few orders were shouted and a few minutes later Wuwung, amazed, came to ask: "Make camp now?" I opened my eyes and said, "Yes, camp here."
>
> After another half an hour I felt well again. It hadn't been exhaustion, but purely a question of my heart, which could not yet bear this effort at this tempo. Meanwhile I was deeply ashamed in front of the troop. (van Eechoud 1953, 26)

"Deeply ashamed in front of the troop"—as we saw in the previous chapter, another Dutch official used a similar phrase to describe how he felt when his carbine malfunctioned during a demonstration held for some troublesome Papuans in the highlands. In this case the cause of this passion was not a jammed firearm but van Eechoud's "wildly beating heart." The sources of van Eechoud's suffering are both mechanical and moral: on

the one hand an unreliable internal organ and, on the other, his "scanty courage" when confronted with this instrument that fails to perform. Van Eechoud doesn't mention having trouble with his weapons on this trip; he never had to shoot them, so they never had a chance to misfire. But other instruments failed van Eechoud, including his watch and his camera, which he foolishly tried to repair with a knife (ibid., 34).[12] It was humiliating to be betrayed by "your" tools.

Here is another way affect figures in van Eechoud's education: fear of humiliation spurs him to assert himself. A few days after that embarrassingly truncated day of hiking, the party came to a twenty-meter rock wall:

> Dejected, I looked at the obstacle. . . . I thought of the coolies with their heavy loads and couldn't see my way out of it. With evident doubt in my voice, I asked Wuwung: "Bisa—is it possible?" whereupon the answer sounded very resolute: "Tidak bisa, toean—it is impossible, sir."
>
> What then?
>
> Bikin tangga—make ladders.

The coolies started collecting branches and rattan. Wuwung, bored of waiting, ascended the wall; van Eechoud carefully climbed up behind him:

> I quickly pulled myself over the edge and stepped cheerfully onto the plateau.
>
> There stood Wuwung, flabbergasted, staring at me. "Lo, toean sudah ada—eh, sir is already here!" rang out immediately, and at once, holding onto the edge, he cried below: "Tidak oesah—no need any more, sir is already up here."
>
> Now it was my turn to be flabbergasted.
>
> —But Wuwung, why is there no need anymore?
>
> —Well, you are already up here, now then!
>
> —Yes, indeed, but then the coolies?
>
> —Oh, they can get to the top easily.
>
> —Are you saying that the ladder was only for me?
>
> —Certainly, sir, I didn't think you would be able to make it to the top.

> —Now listen, Wuwung, beginning now in the future you better believe that I can do whatever you can do—and if it turns out otherwise, I'll never go on another expedition again. (van Eechoud 1953, 37–39)

The coolies dropped the half-made ladders, shouldered their loads, and quickly scrambled up, assisted by their dexterous toes, the cracks in the rock face, the underbrush: more appropriate technologies in this case. Van Eechoud reacted vehemently to what he now recognized as Wuwung's lack of faith in his ability. I can do anything that you can do, he announced, sounding like the lead from the musical *Annie Get Your Gun*. The distribution of agency had suddenly appeared as a threat to his autonomy. The assembling of humans and nonhumans to help him climb the wall (and complete the mission) signaled his companions' belief that the Dutch official "couldn't do it," "tidak bisa," on his own. Van Eechoud may have proved his companions wrong in this particular instance. But he had good reasons to want to nip Wuwung's skepticism in the bud. His role in the spread of Dutch sovereignty—and I dare say his manhood—seemed to be at stake.

In van Eechoud's account of the expedition, this episode marks a turning point. Even though van Eechoud could not sustain the autonomy asserted here, he subsequently managed to present himself as the master of two instruments with the capacity to restore his reputation. Several pages later van Eechoud writes of the police agents' blind trust in "you," the Dutch official, which you must preserve at all costs. Significantly, this blind trust was justified by virtue of van Eechoud's association with a particular technology, the compass of the memoir's title. Recalling evenings spent with the men, "cozy in the tent," van Eechoud writes:

> It is good—and necessary—that an intimate sphere exists, because these folks have blindly put their trust in you. They have come along on a trip that deviates from the usual route and have no idea where they are, how far they have come, what still awaits them; while you yourself, although it is not detailed, still always have a foothold in your measurements, in the data you have collected and your calcu-

> lations while under way. A leader must not jeopardize morale and must never show any doubt or uncertainty. (van Eechoud 1953, 63)

The compass gave van Eechoud a "foothold in [his] measurements" and made the coolies and police agents dependent on him.[13] But we should take this description of the situation with a grain of salt. If we want to think deeply, it's worth noting that the compass is a technology that complicates assumptions about agency. Compasses depend on a magnetism—an earthly passion, if you will: they must be acted upon in order to act.[14] More prosaically, van Eechoud's foothold with his measurements must have seemed small and slippery when cloud cover prevented him from taking readings and establishing his position on the map.

Nor did van Eechoud have such a firm grip on his companions' morale. One day he came to a landmark that confirmed the expedition's location. "With some emphasis I told my men that I now knew precisely where we were and could say what all in all we would encounter. They nodded without much conviction, yes, and hoped apparently for the best" (van Eechoud 1953, 80). At the end of the trip, as the party was traveling down the Mamberamo River, Pattiwael, van Eechoud's valet, stood up in the canoe and told van Eechoud that he was wrong: the government post at Pioneer Camp, their final destination, could not be around the next corner. When van Eechoud was proved correct, the men rejoiced: "'Oree, sekarang hidoep—hurray, we're going to live' was the call, which shows what they were thinking," van Eechoud ruefully remarks (ibid., 89). His ability to predict the party's arrival in Pioneer Camp affirmed the supremacy of the compass over the "leaves, wood, and rattan" of the Papuans. But van Eechoud was no more the master of the technologies required for successful travel than the coolies and police agents were. However uncertainly, they all "blindly put their trust" in a trekking machine whose components and parameters they could only partially discern.

This left the wild Papuans. In their case, the machete proved critical to van Eechoud's efforts to gain the upper hand. Much as

he mobilized "blind trust" to maintain the morale of the coolies and police agents, he sought to master the wild Papuans by turning affect into an instrument. He credits his ability to sympathize with the wild Papuans, like his ability to sympathize with the coolies and agents, with helping him to replace them at the top of the hierarchy of capable subjects. By imagining what these natives were thinking and feeling, van Eechoud profited from their passion for his tools.

Early in the trip, van Eechoud and his companions were troubled by the thought that they were being stalked by the wild Papuans, a source of "unseen and unknown danger" "against which you—even with modern weapons—were powerless."[15] Even the birds seemed to be conspiring against them: they raised the alarm when the expedition approached but let the wild Papuans pass unremarked. Van Eechoud had read the "thick reports," and he knew that "the Papuan" tended to attack at dawn, but that only added to his anxiety. Once he was forced to spend the night in the forest with one of the police agents. Without a watch to tell them when daylight was approaching, they huddled together terrified of every noise they heard (van Eechoud 1953, 76). It was an "uncomfortable feeling" to imagine seeing and feeling with others who were close but indiscernible, dangerous, impossible to place.

Then one day the wild Papuans approached van Eechoud's camp, singing and blowing a shell:

> The agents grabbed their carbines and I felt for my revolver. What did it mean? We didn't know these tribes, their morals and customs. Was this blowing on a shell a declaration of war? Or was it a plain announcement: "We're coming"—and thus meant peace?
>
> Suddenly one of the chaps came out from behind the tree and made a gesture with his open hand that seemed intended to imitate chopping with a machete.
>
> The light went on! These gentlemen had iron hunger! They had naturally, either directly or from neighbors, gotten machetes from earlier expeditions to the Meervlakte and understood their enormous value.

> This was quickly put to the test. I went to stand a few meters in front of the cordon and raised a machete in the air: loud cheers and roars from the other side. With a forceful swing, I threw the object in the direction of the first man: still louder cheers; quickly, the man snatched up the machete and took cover behind his tree.
>
> Apparently, they were dead afraid of us. (van Eechoud 1953, 77–78)

Note how van Eechoud manages to turn the tables on the wild Papuans. Note how swiftly he gets inside their heads and discovers what they want. Now it is the wild Papuans' turn to be "dead afraid." The light went on to illuminate something that upended the hierarchy of capable subjects: these Papuans' insatiable appetite for technological advancement. Van Eechoud's ability to imagine the perspectives and passions of others had earlier been a source of shame and anxiety; now it was a source of sovereign power.

Overcoming their fear, the wild Papuans streamed into the camp, where they exchanged their weapons for metal tools. During the rest of the trip van Eechoud used "silent barter" to provision the expedition: his men stole pigs and produce and left knives, machetes, and cloth in their place.[16] The wild Papuans seemingly stood far above van Eechoud in expertise. But their "iron hunger" revealed who was on top. This Stone Age encounter restored van Eechoud's supremacy and provided an argument for the continuation of Dutch sovereignty. The compass may have guided van Eechoud out of the wilderness, but it was the Stone Age Papuans' passion for the machete that kept the colonial order in place.

The Measure of Men?

The remaining chapters of *With Machete and Compass* relate what van Eechoud did with the expertise he gained on his first journey. They show how he sought to profit from the Papuans' "iron hunger" while mobilizing their other impassioned responses to artifacts, art, dexterity, and skill. These chapters also spin out ambitious fantasies of mastery: thwarted in his effort to transport

supplies up the Mamberamo for another trip, van Eechoud calls for a hydroelectric project to put all that current to good use. To little avail: the region where van Eechoud traveled is still bereft of electricity and roads.

I have focused here on the networks of people and things that made van Eechoud's journey to the Meervlakte possible: what I have called the trekking machine. In this sense my analysis has followed the lead of other scholars who have turned their attention to populations in the interstices of colonialism: from mixed-raced Europeans to the native police agents and civil servants who were often the face of the colonial state (see Ploeg 1995; Stoler 2002; Timmer 2006).[17] The vulnerability of van Eechoud and his colleagues stemmed in part from their dependence on these populations. It stemmed in part from the Papuans' ability to domesticate imported goods, which made them both willing and unreliable participants in colonial state building. It stemmed in part from the recalcitrance of material things. In the case of Dutch New Guinea, we must attend to the full array of agents involved in the civilizing mission to make sense of why history unfolded the way it did.

Affect played a central role in the processes of cultural construction reflected in the texts I have considered, which included the cultural construction of natives imagined to feel themselves feeling in certain ways. These processes involve forces that lie at the limit of what can be recognized as cultural yet that make themselves felt in the everyday world. I am not saying that affect is transparently available to the analyst. As I have endeavored to show, the accounts of feeling a feeling that pervade van Eechoud's story serve a rhetorical purpose: they confirm that van Eechoud was "there" in New Guinea and explain how being there led him to know useful things. The memoir presents Dutch New Guinea as a place best ruled by an official self-confident enough to laugh at his own folly. In this sense van Eechoud's self-deprecation masks a bid for power. And yet van Eechoud's inclination to represent himself in this fashion stems in part from the experiences that his memoir describes. There is more than one way of read-

ing the record of Dutch colonial state building in New Guinea. Although I have focused on van Eechoud's take on the situation, hints of other perspectives fill his book: those of the coolies, the police agents, and the "wild" Papuans, whose motivations were more complex than van Eechoud ever could have guessed.

These episodes from the colonial archive reopen some rather old questions. In 1989 the historian Michael Adas wrote: "The extent to which African and Asian peoples acquiesced to European domination out of respect for the colonizers' self-proclaimed technological superiority is hard to determine. But it is clear that the confidence—or arrogance—with which European administrators and missionaries set about the task of ruling and remaking the societies of Africa and Asia owed much to their sense of mechanical and scientific mastery" (1989, 204–5). Machines became the measure of men in the encounters I have considered, but not in the fashion that Adas describes.[18] Inspired by adventures in the highlands, van Eechoud made the Papuans' uplift into the "kernel of his being." What gave rise to this commitment was less a sense of mastery than an experience of impotence. Hungry for iron, the Stone Age Papuan helped van Eechoud put out of mind the miscalculations and malfunctions that had dogged him on the trail. This figure allowed the Dutch official to convince himself, despite his many troubles, that he still had the technological upper hand.

Going back further, in 1967, in *Technics and Human Development*, the critic and intellectual Lewis Mumford told a tale in which the affective energy specific to humans holds the key to their technological accomplishments.[19] Recalling Émile Durkheim's sociological explanation of the "reality" behind religion, Mumford wrote of the behavior that gave rise to tool use, "When these acts were performed by a whole group, under a strong emotional reaction, they would tend to be rhythmic and in unison; and since rhythm itself brings organic satisfaction, they would demand repetition, which in turn would bring a further reward in increased skill" (Mumford 1967, 60). Technology begins with what Mumford calls "demonic compulsions" that can be har-

nessed in dream, rituals, and repetitive practices but never fully tamed.

However fantastic it may seem, Mumford's just-so story challenges not only the "myth of the machine" but also the myth of human mastery conveyed by the idea that individuals learn to use tools only in order to benefit from their utility or the prestige associated with them. By tapping into people's "organic satisfactions," we could say that tools learn to use individuals, whatever practical purposes they may ultimately serve. Indeed, the very opposition between the individual and the tool breaks down when Mumford argues that the human body was the first useful thing.

My findings scarcely address the question of whether humanity is defined by tool use, narrowly conceived, as opposed to ritual or language. But they do suggest the value of Mumford's speculations in helping us address the question of the connection between technology and colonial dreams. I will take these reflections further in the following chapter, where I return to the Wissel Lakes to consider more accounts of how Dutch officials and wild Papuans came together in affect-laden spectacles involving technologies ranging from gramophones to guns. At any moment, technology can put the lie to a sovereign's claim to supreme and absolute power.

Jealousy: like sympathy, this seemingly banal sentiment can take us down unexpected paths. Some could lead to an anthropology that is empirical in ways that become possible when we attend to the affective dimensions of our work. Anyone who has done fieldwork in a technologically unfamiliar place can recognize him- or herself in van Eechoud's story. I certainly recognize the pleasures and ordeals of my dissertation research on Biak, where I stumbled on mangrove logs, burned rice, and mangled the local language. The "I" who collected my "data" resided in a tangled web that ran from the roads where I traveled on old trucks to the friendships that opened the way. Could we describe anthropological analysis as an effort to recover sovereignty of a sort, a sovereignty lost when one faces one's dependence on unfamiliar distributions of persons and things? Or is it always our

aim to disavow our power? Either way, our mission is impossible: authority is as hard to definitively deny as sovereignty is to definitively claim. Van Eechoud got a handle on his feelings by narrating his experience. So do anthropologists: a discomforting thought. Jealousy can eat you up. But it can also teach you a thing or two.

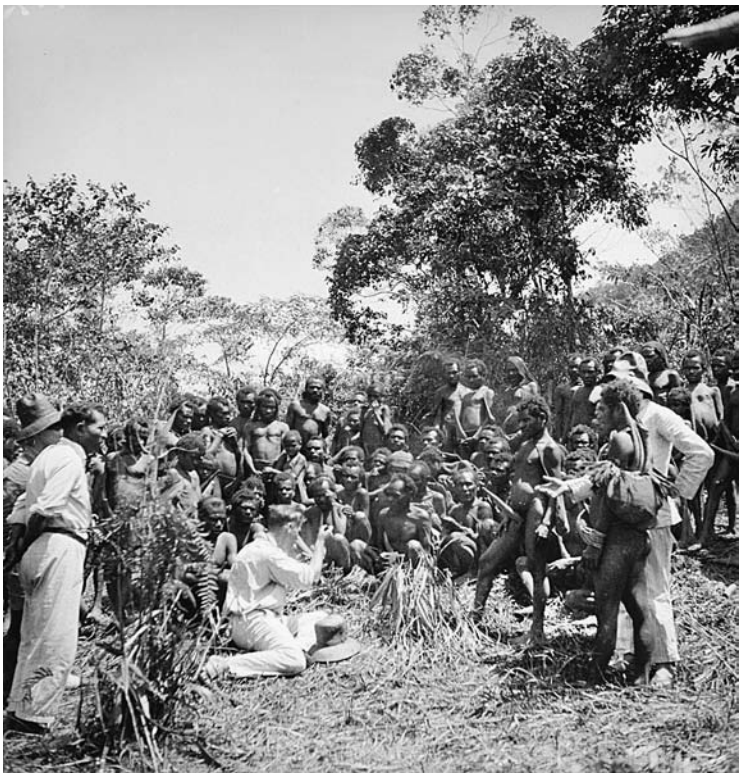

FIGURE 7. Expedition member S. van der Groot demonstrates the workings of a magnifying glass to a group of Ekari Papuans. 1936. National Museum of World Cultures. Coll. no. TM-10032903.

4

Technological Performances

What is a colonial officer to do? When the radio he has been waiting for to begin his expedition into uncharted land finally arrives, only to break the first time it is used? When the coolies he has recruited from a nearby coastal settlement announce they are going on strike? When his superiors suddenly decide he should head for an entirely different region from the one he was planning for—a region for which he has no maps and has read no reports? When the scientist along for the expedition, who has never been to this island, changes the route under the mistaken assumption that it is harder to travel by water than to walk? When it becomes apparent that the erstwhile commander of the expedition has little control over its components—and little reason to think that the natives he meets will be impressed by his government's supposed sovereignty over their land?

Jan van Eechoud faced all these challenges, and pondered them grimly, while waiting at Pioneer Bivak to begin his third expedition up the Mamberamo River into the Dutch New Guinea highlands. What's a colonial officer to do? Here's what Van Eechoud did: he built a machine. To pass the time and make himself useful, Van Eechoud gathered ethnological data from members of the surrounding tribes, inviting the Papuans into his tent to be interviewed in a mixture of Malay and the little he had

picked up of the local tongue. With a crowd of Papuans watching, the individual providing information sat on a petroleum drum, answering questions on kinship, religion, and politics in exchange for tobacco and food. Some "lecturers," as van Eechoud called them, enjoyed the refreshments so much that they rambled on and on. Afraid of offending his informants, van Eechoud used "indirect means to end a discussion" (1953, 181). At first he tricked the entire group into following him outside, then he jumped back into the tent and locked the door. Then he came up with a more ingenious solution:

> The petroleum drum was placed on a plank, so that it was separated from the ground. Attached to the plank was an insulated wire that ran in a wide arc along the wall, then outside, where it was attached to the spark plug of a Delco motor [a battery-operated starter motor, presumably from one of the motorboats used by the expedition]. When I wanted a lecturer to go away, without interrupting the discussion or looking up I said under my breath to Dr. Koppeschaar, "Doc, run it!" After a minute, the doctor vanished outside and pressed the Delcomotor's start knob. All of a sudden the lecturer sat up with a grimace on his face, convulsively waving his arms and legs until he had a chance to get off. After that he stood there, looking around, asking himself what had happened to him.
>
> They never grasped the connection between the drum, wire, and Delco motor, but when the trick had been played several times, they very well got wind of one coincidence: if someone was invited to sit down, he squinted at the drum, looked at me suspiciously, and asked anxiously, "Doc, run it?" After my comforting declaration that there would be no "Doc, run it," he would take a seat and light up a cigarette. (van Eechoud 1953, 181)

Unable to command the Stone Age Papuans directly, van Eechoud managed to dominate them through a proxy. He bent them to his will through the words by which he commanded a modern machine.

Van Eechoud didn't stage a technology demonstration in the typical way, which would have involved producing what Erving Goffman called a "theatrical frame" (1986 [1974], 124–55) by us-

ing conventional signals (such as a sideshow barker's "Step right up!") to attract an audience and focus its attention on the action about to unfold. Yet this scene contains many of the ingredients that will concern us in the pages that follow: a machine unfamiliar to local people produced an action that elicited fear, surprise, amusement, and curiosity. And in the hopeful imaginations of colonial impresarios, these performances elicited respect for Dutch visitors and the regimes they represented.

Van Eechoud performed the trick with the drum, wire, and motor following his adventures in the Wissel Lakes. In this chapter I return to that region to focus on technology demonstrations staged between 1936 and 1953. As we have seen, daily life on the journeys van Eechoud and his colleagues took through this and other parts of the highlands blurred the boundaries between colonizers and colonized, not to mention between New Guinea's erstwhile rulers and their tools. The technological performances I examine intervened to redraw a sharp line. At the same time they staged a meeting between the Stone Age and modernity, they opened a gulf that kept these times apart.

In making this argument, I draw on snapshots from three authors. In addition to the works of Bijlmer and van Eechoud, I will consider Dr. K. W. J. Boelen's memoir depicting a later moment of colonial state building, when the Dutch returned to the Wissel Lakes after the war (1955; see also Meijer Ranneft 1952; van Emmerik 1953). These snapshots enable me to track the progress of state building in the highlands as the Dutch consolidated their hold on the region and established an apparatus with a growing number of the elements associated with modern rule. They also offer glimpses of Papuan perspectives on this changing scene. Over the period I cover, the Wissel Lakes' inhabitants, and Papuans elsewhere in Dutch New Guinea, became increasingly nimble in appropriating the authority and status they came to associate with motors, gramophones, magnets, and other modern instruments. At the same time, they grappled with and sometimes reproduced the view that made Stone Age primitives out of people who for historically contingent reasons used stone axes and knives.

The authors I consider didn't invent the idea that Dutch New Guinea was stuck in the Stone Age. Earlier in the twentieth century, when English and Dutch explorers ventured into the territory's mountainous interior in what Chris Ballard, Steven Vink, and Anton Ploeg (2002) call "the race to the snows," the notion that the people they encountered were throwbacks to an earlier stage in human development was ready to hand. The record of one such expedition, A. F. Wollaston's *Pygmies and Papuans: The Stone Age Today in Dutch New Guinea* (1912), was a popular best seller in its time. What Bijlmer, van Eechoud, and Boelen did was to give political purchase and staying power to an image that justified Dutch New Guinea's prolonged colonization and denial of the Papuans' political rights (see Rutherford 2012b).

But that's skipping to the end of the story. The task of this chapter to scrutinize how the Stone Age became palpable for these adventurers. To grasp how technology demonstrations helped to consolidate the Stone Age image of New Guinea, we must approach them as performances—performances that both acted out claims to sovereignty and put it at risk.

How to Do Things with Things

We have all been there. We're watching television. Steve Jobs stands at a podium introducing the latest Apple product. An enormous screen lights up behind him, and he puts the device through its paces. Or we're at the movies. A magician walks onto a stage and steps into a wire cage. Lights flash, the wires shoot off sparks, and he disappears, only to reappear at the back of the hall. Demonstrations of technology: they entertain and sometimes dazzle, but they also create the impression of a consolidated kind of agency. Apple's founder both borrowed power from and lent power to devices like the iPad. His technology demonstrations invited shareholders to buy into the premise that the creative power of a man and a brand, not a network of people and previous inventions, found expression in a machine's novel actions. A magician does the same thing when he performs a technological

trick. His performance constitutes a massive disavowal of the distributed nature of agency: the networks of people, artifacts, and histories of practice gathered together in every technique (see Heidegger 1977; Hutchins 1995; Stiegler 1998; Riddington 1999; Mauss 2006). "The Real Transported Man," not the transporter, appears on the marquis in the 2006 film, *The Prestige*: the transporter's agency becomes the magician's own.

These examples reveal the performative nature of technology demonstrations. The philosopher John Austin (1976) defined performatives as phrases—like "I promise," "I deny," "I swear," or "I declare"—that do what they say they are doing in the very act of being said. What Austin called a "speech act" creates the impression of willful agency, attesting to a speaker's capacity to change the world. In the case of technology demonstrations, people achieve a similar outcome—not only, as Austin puts it, by doing things with words but also by doing things with things.

In colonial settings, this aspect of technology demonstrations becomes obvious. Greg Dening (1980) writes of the "shows of force" that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ship captains felt compelled to stage in order to control the Marquesan islanders who swarmed onto their decks. To stop the islanders from stealing, the sailors sometimes shot a few. The others learned to flee, and to appreciate the power of firearms, which they soon began acquiring by trading local goods. On the Australian half of New Guinea, twentieth-century patrol officers and prospectors sometimes staged brutally direct shows of force, as when some Yonki men attacked Jim Taylor and his police opened fire, or when Mick and Dan Leahy shot a handful of Papuans in a village where they found gold (Gammage 1998, 11, 12). But they also staged technology demonstrations as a way of putting their capacities on display. One sees such a scene at the end of the 1983 documentary *First Contact*, when the Leahy brothers line up some Papuans to show them how a rifle can kill a pig (see, e.g., Connolly and Anderson 1983).[1]

On the Dutch side of the island, the administration avoided open conflict, and there were far fewer killings of either locals

or their guests in the encounters that accompanied state building in the interior. Recall how van Eechoud was tasked with establishing peaceful contact with "our" authority and making the Papuans' behavior more "predictable," "according to our concepts" (see chapter 2). Technology demonstrations, especially involving firearms, proved a favorite method for trying to ensure that the Papuans would recognize "our authority" as authority—especially when the guns were wielded by bedraggled and hungry hikers who scarcely seemed capable of caring for themselves. Repeatedly seeing a rifle or gramophone in action would make Papuans better able to predict the behavior of modern weapons and devices. Their own behavior would become more predictable as a result.

Somehow the shooting of pigs—and, as we will see, the playing of gramophones—would constitute a Dutch "I" and a Papuan "you," the agent and patient of colonial sovereignty. The Papuans would come to recognize technological supremacy as an attribute of Dutch personhood: something that these "white men" had naturally. In insisting on the range of human and nonhuman agents involved in every act of thinking, Edwin Hutchins has criticized the idea that primitive technologies are the product of primitive minds (1995, 355). The technology demonstrations staged by Dutch officials had the effect of perpetuating this mistake. Van Eechoud could not always control the trekking machine; only rarely could he tell the "primitives" what to do. Technology demonstrations enabled him to persuade himself and others, however fleetingly, that he himself was the master of his modern instruments and that these machines were the measure of men.

Another way to put this is that Dutch officials staged these performances in order to cultivate particular inferences among the Papuans (see Hume 1988 [1748]; Rutherford 2009). Technology demonstrations invited Papuan audience members to trace an effect to a cause, a cause residing in the body of a human actor and, by extension, others like him. The concept of personal or group identity arguably results from just such acts of inference

(see Hume 1988 [1748], 50–66). People do things, we presume, because they are the sorts of people prone to behaving in just this way.

Speech acts offer a particularly powerful way to link an identity and an action. The power of a performative resides in a speaker's ability to refer to the fact that he or she is speaking (see Lee 1997; see also Rutherford 2012b). The relationship between our words and the world may be arbitrary, and our statements may be erroneous. But when I say, "I am saying," I can't help but speak the truth.[2] This utterance enables me to believe, if only for an instant, that the power to speak belongs to the speaker alone, instead of stemming from multiple sources: from the qualities of sound waves to the evolutionary processes that gave us our tongues, ears, and brains to the habits and expectations we have acquired from living in settings where people use signs in particular ways. What Austin (1976) calls speech acts are technology demonstrations, to the extent that language is a tool, a prosthetic device made by humans that in turn makes humans what they are (see Mumford 1967; Stiegler 1998). Rifle demonstrations and wedding vows both focus attention on the fiction of a cause: the officer who pulls the trigger, the bride who says "I do."

Paying heed to this function of technology demonstrations not only helps us better understand their appeal for colonial officials. It also helps us understand how these performances could go astray. Speech acts work because they are conventional, which means they are repeatable—or "iterable," to use Derrida's (1982 and 1986) term. "I promise" may lose some of its "felicity"—its "happy" effect—when uttered in jest or onstage. This question of iterability bears in two ways on the efficacy of the technology demonstrations I consider. On the one hand, this was not a setting where one could presume that what one took to be conventions were, in fact, conventions: colonial officials had to repeat their experiments, as it were—engineering experiences that created expectations in order for a demonstration to have its desired effect. On the other hand, the iterability of technology demonstrations gave Papuans a chance to engage in their own experi-

ments, which sometimes had subversive effects. Suffice to say that local notions of personhood, agency, and authority loomed large in their performances, in ways I can only gesture toward here.[3] To get a sense of the powers and dangers of these colonial performances, let's turn to our first snapshot, which portrays a performance staged by H. J. T. Bijlmer, who had a particularly keen desire to use modern technology to reveal the nature of primitive selves.

Snapshot 1: The Circus Comes to Town

As an amateur anthropologist, H. J. T. Bijlmer specialized in the study of the racial types that made up the human species. He arrived in the southern part of the Wisselmeren in 1935–36 at the end of an expedition to investigate the so-called Tapiro Pygmies, a small-statured group of Papuans first encountered by Europeans in 1910.[4] He reached the Wisselmeren by way of Mimika, the coastal region that was the entryway to the region for van Eechoud as well. Bijlmer was no novice; during an even earlier expedition, in 1920, he had visited the Swart Valley, the first densely populated area of the highlands that Dutch explorers reached by foot. Bijlmer called his book on the later journey *To the Ends of the Earth*. As his prose makes clear, New Guinea had lost none of its charm for him in the intervening years. Framed as fodder for the popular imagination, Bijlmer's account of his adventure shows how technology demonstrations gave Dutch travelers a sense of superiority in moments when their mastery seemed in doubt.

For Bijlmer, stone tools and Stone Age selves went together in a way that made New Guinea's present a window onto the Netherlands' past. In the Swart Valley he found himself in "a world from past ages! Because weaving and pottery appeared unknown, and people felled the forest and cut planks with stone axes! Not a scrap of metal was to be seen; the Stone Age, sunk deep in the mists of prehistory in Europe, was here in full bloom. . . . The

extant stone ax is the sign that this folk still pass their days untouched by civilization. That is why studying them is so extraordinarily important" (Bijlmer n.d., 17). For Bijlmer, the continued use of stone axes in the Swart Valley and elsewhere was a sign of the mountain Papuans' isolation: this was a land forgotten by time, a land to which the civilized world had "brought nothing" (ibid., 93). This characterization is, of course, debatable. Given the lengthy trade routes that crossed the highlands, its inhabitants' multilingualism, and the delight so many of them took in traveling and trading, it seems unlikely that highlands Papuans waited passively for imports to arrive (see, e.g., Pospisil 1978 [1963]; Haenen 1992; Timmer 2000). Yet it is illuminating of the fantasy that Bijlmer experienced his technology demonstrations as affirming: a fantasy in which the Dutch explorer reached across the eons to touch the lives of the mountain Papuans and was exhilarated to discover that these living ancestors were just like him.

Bijlmer's experiences in the Wisselmeren fed this fantasy. After taking biometric measurements among the Tapiro, Bijlmer returned to the coast and made his way into the region, where the first community he reached was in the densely populated Pogi Valley. The inhabitants were Kapauku, members of the ethnolinguistic group that made up the lion's share of the population in the vicinity of the lakes. While the coolies made camp, Bijlmer and the Dutch officers sat among curious onlookers; gradually a dozen men gathered. Bijlmer managed to lure several women and a child close enough to put a string of beads around the little girl's neck.

> But the real excitement came after a larger crowd had gathered.
>
> We decided to do a demonstration with the gramophone. We had brought this instrument along in the first place to observe the effect it would have on primitives, but I will happily admit I also got much pleasure out of it. (Bijlmer n.d., 137)

A score of men pressed up close to the table; the six women sat at a safer distance.

> We chose Sarie Marijs, sung by a deep male voice, as the first record. Upon first hearing the music, the listeners rubbed their ears in wonder, but when the male voice resonated their amazement knew no bounds. Ten faces—the women had taken flight—stared in dumb amazement at the fantastic instrument . . . and now these were human faces in full form! They may actually have been primitive, somewhat foolish faces, but now they exuded spirit and effervescent life. Each reacted in his manner. There appeared tense attention on the face of one; straightforward wonder on that of another; paranoid fear, cheerful joy, dumb ecstasy, an investigative gaze on the rest! There were those who, without showing any fear, took up the matter seriously and sank into a reverie; there were others who, after they overcame their hesitation, examined the device from all angles and didn't recoil from a bold investigation. Next to peaceful thinkers, one noticed clever investigators in the making. . . . No, it's not like we found anything different than what is to be expected by every student of humanity. But such an experience at what one might say is the source is always worth mentioning. As if in a fantasy, we discovered in the end ourselves: we are here within our own prehistory! (Bijlmer n.d., 137–38)

Our own prehistoric circus: "the Papuans' stance towards us was scarcely different from that of a spectacle hungry crowd at a fairground back home" (ibid.). The demonstration brought familiar passions into focus by wiping the "foolishness" off the villagers' primitive faces. Bijlmer took the most pleasure in the "clever scientists" in the making: those who shared his own "investigative gaze." That's not to say that Bijlmer saw the Papuan researchers as capable of penetrating the mystery. They gave up when Bijlmer played a second record, which featured a female singer and destroyed their theory that Bijlmer or one of his colleagues was throwing his voice.

Bijlmer had this happy scene to remember during episodes that called his competence into doubt. In another passage, he describes huddling, wet and cold, on a rugged trail, waiting for his coolies to build a shelter. His Kapauku guides looked on with pity and scorn, but there was no reason to worry about their reactions. The Dutch could afford to be "friendly" with the Pap-

uans, Bijlmer noted, given that "the respect that our arrival, our appearance, and all our doings inspired was so great" (n.d., 157). This is a fantasy of superiority, but if we follow Rupert Stasch's (2009) observations on the temporality of kinship, then we can see that it tamed otherness as much as it created it. The Stone Age Papuan did not appear as our father—someone who shared the current moment but whose death the Dutch would survive. Rather he appeared as a younger version of "ourselves": someone whom, outside of science fiction, the Dutch could never meet. A temporal wall divided the Dutch from the Papuans. A trick with a record player was all it took.

But the gramophone was not the only machine Bijlmer relied upon to affirm his superiority. The expedition's leaders might have been friendly, but they weren't foolish: they insisted that the party should travel with armed guards. Van Eechoud, who came to the Wisselmeren to govern, not measure heads, could not be quite as confident in the outcome of these performances. Let's turn now to our second snapshot and the multiple ways a rifle could misfire.

Snapshot 2: Performing Sovereignty

During the trip he took with a long line of coolies and police agents to establish a post in Enarotali, Police Commissioner Jan van Eechoud passed through the same region where Bijlmer had conducted measurements. In chapter 2 I described the logistical difficulties van Eechoud faced in carrying out this mission. When it came to recruiting the support of local Papuans, challenges arose right from the start. Van Eechould wasn't sure that the first group of Kapaukus he met would be as friendly as they had been with earlier visitors. So he decided to make a show of force "to get rid of any unpleasant ideas that might have found their way into their heads" (1953, 103).

> Behind a twenty-centimeter tree, an empty trekking drum was set. Five meters in front of the tree, I positioned myself with a carbine.

> Through gestures and by making noise, I tried to make it clear that the tree as well as the can would be bored through with a loud report. Full of tension, the group watched. I aimed, shot, and looked triumphantly to see the effect on their faces—but there were no more faces. With great leaps, some of the group had vanished into the forest, while others raced at full speed to the other side of the garden running, or so they thought, for their lives.
>
> If another shot had been fired, then the poor devils in their panic would have climbed over Mt. Carsten. But we began to call reassuringly—at least it seemed to us reassuringly. Meanwhile, at least a half an hour went by before a couple of them dared to return, wavering and reluctant. Fear was again in their eyes when they looked at either me or the carbine. (van Eechoud 1953, 103)

Van Eechoud began the demonstration with a prophecy: gestures and noise meant to mimic the shooting of the carbine. He used a drum and a tree as targets; later he used pigs, which provided him with an even better way of demonstrating his weapons'—and his government's—power. The demonstration displayed the sovereign's grip on what Giorgio Agamben (1998, 2) calls "the mere fact of living," which is what pigs and, in a different way, trees share with people. But sovereignty needs more than "bare life"; it needs an audience as well (Rutherford 2012b). Returning to D. H. Lawrence's poem, which has so much to teach us about this problem, recall the narrator's horror, then remorse, at the blow he feels compelled to deliver when the snake exits the scene of encounter and slides back down its hole. The Kapauku had to fear van Eechoud enough to remove any "unpleasant ideas" from their heads. But they had to trust him enough to feed him, given his difficulties with the supply line. To balance these imperatives, van Eechoud had to display the state's capacity for violence without scaring the Papuans off.

As it turned out, firearm demonstrations did help to sustain van Eechoud's security and food supply—but not for the reasons he presumed they would. When news of van Eechoud's expedition reached Timiela, the inhabitants of this village brought the

colonial officer a piglet and asked him to shoot it (van Eechoud 1953, 114). Like the audience at a tightrope act, the Kapauku found these "executions" unnerving, and yet they enjoyed the show. Van Eechoud's successor, Jan Victor de Bruijn, gained enough of a sense of local life to understand the appeal of these performances: pigs were publicly slaughtered at the elaborate pig feasts where Kapauku gathered to dance and trade shells for pork (see Pospisil 1978 [1963], 270). The shooting of a pig with a revolver intended to scare hostile villagers also served as a familiar way of making "friends" (van Eechoud 1953, 138).

These Dutch travelers were able to assure themselves of the "deep respect"—and even "affection"—that "our arrival, our appearance, and all our doings" had inspired (Bijlmer n.d., 178) in the Kapauku. Yet their writings bear witness to what potentially could become disturbing appropriations of the power the Dutch seemed to wield when they played a record or shot a pig. Bijlmer tells of young Kapauku repeating the experiment he did with a magnet, showing off their own agency to their friends. De Bruijn describes how some villagers chanted "So! So!" whenever he shot a pig, repeating the expression the colonial officer always uttered when the deed was done (Rhys 1947, 44). After the war, when the Dutch reestablished a colonial presence in New Guinea, some Kapauku rebelled and lost their lives. But even as Papuans learned more radical ways of appropriating the machinery of state building, they found it increasingly difficult to leave the Stone Age behind.

Snapshot 3: Our Demonstrations, Their Demonstrations

Dutch officials returned to Wisselmeren in 1948 to reopen the post in Enarotali. Assigned to head up the health department, the author of our third snapshot, Dr. K. J. W. Boelen, arrived several years later with his pregnant wife. Technology demonstrations of a routine sort had become the order of the day: those that made up the work of the growing corps of Kapauku teachers,

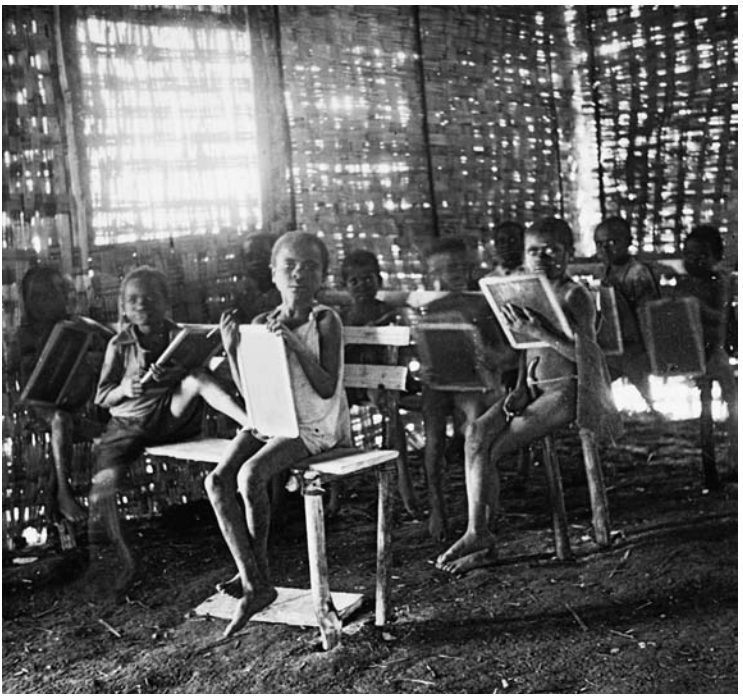

FIGURE 8. Civilization School in Enarotali. Before 1950. National Museum of World Cultures. Coll. no. TM-10008433.

nurses, and clerks. But even as they mastered modern instruments, the Stone Age stuck to their identities like glue from a label they couldn't peel off.

Boelen, like other chroniclers of this period, spilled much ink describing typical Kapauku technology: houses, fire starters, and net bags, but above all clothes (see also Meijer Ranneft 1952; van Emmerik 1953). He found the attire of new Kapauku police recruits particularly arresting: "The corps follows military order. The Kapauku recruits take part in the force in local clothing, and it is a funny sight to see them, in full gravity, under the command of the Agent First Class, performing drills dressed only in penis gourds. But they quickly get their uniforms, and one can see an impeccably clad help agent, with his wife in her fiber skirt, off to

church on a Sunday morning, both fully aware of their importance" (Boelen 1955, 22). Boelen goes on to note that the Kapauku agents could prove very helpful as guides or interpreters. They were less adept in the main responsibility of the police force, which was to lead the locals "to accustom themselves to having a higher authority above them." Instead they remained in the thick of local things, using "the authority of their uniform" to win their own family disputes (ibid.). We don't often think of wearing an outfit as demonstrating a technology, but Boelen's remarks are legible in these terms: the uniform becomes a tool the agents turn toward their own ends.

But in making this point, Boelen also points to the mismatch between Papuans and modern technology: the clothing never quite fit these men. In another passage, Boelen describes how the "old customs . . . came again to the surface during tours." "During rainstorms, one sometimes sees the Kapauku agents putting back on their penis gourds, although they keep the American helmets with the initials 'A.P.' (Algemeen Politie) [General Police] on their heads and their rifles on their shoulders as a sign of their dignity. Also at feasts, the awkward clothing is set aside and the penis gourd takes its place" (Boelen 1955, 22). From the depths of Papuan identity, Stone Age tendencies can't help but resurface: you can take the Papuan out of the penis gourd, but you can't take the penis gourd out of the Papuan. When Stone Age bodies meet modern garments, the effect is both amusing and ephemeral: modernity doesn't sit well, and it is easily cast off. Boelen's memoir partakes of a fantasy that creates a tight bond between the essential traits of Europeans and the capacities of modern equipment. The essential traits of Papuans, by contrast, are at odds with modern technology. Their technological performances are inherently infelicitous: theatrical spoofs rather than serious enactments of an agency that cleaves to an instrument like a hand slipped into a glove. This is a conceit purpose-built for what Homi Bhabha (1994) called the ambivalence of colonial discourse (see also Spyer 1998). On the one hand, natives had to have the capacity to become like their colonizers for the civilizing

mission to have meaning. Yet they couldn't actually achieve this goal, or the civilizing mission would have to end.

More disturbing appropriations of modern things and ways also preoccupied the small Dutch community. Officials wrote extensively about the rebellion that members of the Pakage clan mounted against the Dutch government and its proxies. The violence against persons and property that took place during this conflict merely confirmed the intractability of Stone Age practices; in all but a few regions, the Dutch gave up on stopping local wars. Less easy to put out of mind was Zacheus Pakage, a Kapauku convert sent by American missionaries to Makassar for training (Giay 1995; see also Boelen 1955, 22–23; van Emmerik 1953, 36–39).[5] Pakage had belonged to a group of young Papuans who had accompanied Jan Victor de Bruijn while he was evading the Japanese. Upon his return from the seminary in 1950, Pakage insisted on being posted in his own home region, where he used his influence to begin a movement using Christian ritual and doctrine against the colonial regime.[6] The power of coastal Papuans also became the target of capture. A husband and wife who had lived in Kokonau, a town on the southern coast, unsettled Dutch officials when they returned to the Wisselmeren to open a "school." They modeled loincloths, a coastal garment, and demonstrated fire walking, a coastal custom, to prove they had access to supernatural powers (van Emmerik 1953, 36). Here were examples of mimicry gone too far.

And yet even as the Kapauku learned more and more radical ways of appropriating others' technologies, they also were forced to recognize, and sometimes even internalize, the racial hierarchy on which Dutch self-assurance rested. However subversive they might have seemed, Papuan technology demonstrations could not help but affirm the conceit underlying the Stone Age fantasy. In using the same tricks as the Dutch did to demonstrate their superiority, Kapauku leaders strengthened the opposition that divided modern and Stone Age bodies and things.

This opposition had the potential to poison relationships among Papuans with different histories of colonial contact.

Boelen relates the following incident involving his Kapauku houseboy, Marcus, and a new maid the doctor's family had recruited from the coast.

> The wife of a colleague from Biak offered to find a Biak girl. Marcus helped us set up the small room next to the kitchen. We put in a bed and laid an earthen floor. When Jacomina arrived with the Catalina, she was exuberant from her first flight and found everything lovely. Marcus, in a clean, pretty shirt, carried her bag with an aggrieved look. She found him a most amusing boy and spoke to him in rapid Malay, so that he could barely follow her. She nearly choked when she saw her first mountain Papuan walking by in a penis gourd. She found our house pretty, was taken by her room, and asked my wife a hundred things. Marcus deported himself very shyly, but within an hour he found that the women's chatter must come to an end, and it was time for more scientific pursuits. He put his slate under his arm and said firmly, "Mama, I'm going to school." This did not impress Jacomina in the least. In Biak, most children start school at the normal age and have already finished by the time they are twelve. She began to laugh and asked him bluntly: "Such a big boy already, and you are still going to school? How funny. How old are you. and what grade are you in?" (Boelen 1955, 70)

Marcus "slinked off" with an offended sniff; "things were never in order between him and Jacomina." Note how this coastal Papuan had internalized the Dutch view that made Stone Age tribes out of people who had once used stone tools. Marcus's performance with the books and slate could not make him seem "civilized" to Jacomina. *This* technology demonstration's failure justified continued colonization. The Stone Age was becoming a prison that was hard to escape.

Paper's Power

A Dutch official sets up a gramophone and turns it on. His finger pulls a trigger and a bullet leaves a barrel, speeding toward a hapless pig. We can trace these events to an endless series of causes: from the supplier who sold these devices, to the govern-

ment coffers that paid for them, to the experiences that shaped the official's habits and expectations so he could operate these machines. This is not to mention the histories that gave rise to the gramophone and the rifle, which included the moments of memory and anticipation that are inscribed in every technical thing (see Stiegler 1998). All these possibilities are put out of mind as the official sets these machines in motion. Of course, a clever Papuan could well have asked the colonial official, Did he himself understand how a gramophone or a rifle works? No one ever grasps, no one ever masters, the workings of their own minds and bodies, let alone all the other things of which social persons are composed.

Among these things is the technology of writing: the paper, pens, typewriters, filing cabinets, printing presses, archives, and libraries that made these officials' stories available to me and through me to you. "The Papuan is not conscious that the paper's power lies in the words written on it," Bijlmer wrote of a Kapauku messenger who loudly announced the instructions he had been given instead of simply handing over the letter (1938, 174). In fact, the messenger was right: paper doesn't speak by itself. Its power lies not merely in the words written upon it but in how it is handled—how it enters circulation and with what effects. Paper played a central role in fueling the Stone Age fantasy that continues to dog the people of today's West Papua. The texts I have considered reached a broad Dutch audience. And the effects on West Papua's people were great.

In the decades following the period described in these snapshots, the idea that Papuans were living in the Stone Age persisted. And the trope persists to this day. Only by attending to the power of paper—and the fraught encounters that left their traces in these texts—can we grasp how the Stone Age gained its grip.

Essays are technology demonstrations, and while our status as their authors is fictive, our responsibilities are real, as I make clear in the next and final part of this book. How should today's anthropologists of West Papua be mobilizing paper's power? What

should we make of our own deployment of all this machinery and the pleasures and anxieties it provokes? With what habits and passions should we be handling our words? Contending with the Stone Age fantasy that has dogged West Papuans may be the right place to begin.

FIGURE 9. Religious education given by a Papuan guru of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CAMA) to Ekari Papuan children at Enarotali. 1955. National Museum of World Cultures. Coll. no. TM-10008329.

part 3

Lessons for a New Anthropology

5

Sympathy and the Savage Slot

Can anthropology escape the savage slot? This is the question the late Michel-Rolph Trouillot asked us in 1991 with an urgency that remains palpable today. Anthropology's complicity with Western imperialism, Trouillot argued, went deeper than the fact that its practitioners cooperated with colonial administrators. It went deeper than the admission of native voices to our monographs could possibly reach. According to Trouillot, the predicaments of twentieth-century anthropology had their roots in the Renaissance, when a new genre of writings defined the West through a comparison to newly "discovered" non-Western others. When anthropologists took over from travel writers and philosophers, they inherited this field of inquiry. Their discipline remained the home for "specialists in savagery," even as intellectual fashions changed. These days we steer clear of topics that smack of savagery. We do multi-sited projects. We study up. We triangulate, rather than opposing "us" to "them." And yet a bad aftertaste still lingers. Can anthropology really escape the savage slot?

My answer in this book has been no, or at least not simply by imagining that we've moved on to better things. The people we study may have changed, but we still must come to grips with the presumptions that structure anthropological ways of knowing. "To claim the specificity of otherness," Trouillot wrote, "is

to suggest a residual of historical experience that always escapes universalisms exactly because history itself always involves irreducible subjects" (1991, 38). It is a challenge to do justice to irreducible subjects when the impossible dream of bridging differences is built into your tools. Our ethnographic methods are dependent upon the imaginative sharing of passions and perspectives: what eighteenth-century philosopher David Hume called "sympathy" (1962 [1738] and 1988 [1748]), a concept I explained in chapter 2. This "principle of human nature," turned into a technology, is what supports our claim to know what it would be like to inhabit another sociocultural world. The desire to find the self in the other, which finds expression in the savage slot, is indestructible because its aim is unachievable. No one can truly stand in anyone else's shoes. Nor can anyone truly stand in their own, for that matter; to have a self is to see oneself from another point of view. Anthropologists bump up against this dilemma on a regular basis. The ethical and epistemological quandaries it raises are both our hope and our bane. In his more vehement moments, Trouillot wrote not of escaping the savage slot but of destroying it. We can do so only if we confront it head on.

All this may seem abstract. But the story I have been telling illustrates these issues in vivid terms. This book has focused on a locus classicus for savagery: an island that is still widely depicted as a Stone Age land. I have shown how sympathy became a technology of state building in the territory during the 1930s, when colonial officials arrived to open the first permanent government post in the highlands, which was the homeland of dozens of Papuan tribes. I have described how these officials attempted to put themselves in Papuan shoes and feel Papuan feelings in an attempt to devise interventions that would make these natives easier to rule. I've gone on to show how this tendency to identify with the Papuans proved embarrassing when technological mishaps occurred—and spurred the Dutch to reassert their sovereignty by claiming the agency associated with technological might. Throughout, I've made suggestions about this case's implications for how we contend with anthropology's own

practices (see Rutherford 2009 and 2012a). In this chapter I put a face on these formulations by examining what happened when a prominent American legal anthropologist ventured into this space of colonial state building. I look at how this anthropologist sympathized and with what effects.

The anthropologist I consider is Leopold Pospisil, who conducted fieldwork in the Wissel Lakes among the Kapauku Papuans in the early 1950s. My sources for this discussion are plentiful and varied: they include interview data along with archival materials and Pospisil's prolific writings (see Pospisil 1972, 1974, and 1978). At first glance Pospisil might seem like an odd choice for my purposes. In his writings he was unrepentantly universalizing, quick to employ Western categories, and convinced of the veracity of his "facts."[1] Some have accused him of running roughshod over the "native" point of view (Goodale 1998).[2] Pospisil participated in the flights of fancy through which colonial officials came to experience Papuans as Stone Age versions of themselves. Yet his work provides us with an entry for investigating how these flights of fancy arose in response to forces that were not simply reducible to colonial interests. Local desires and fascinations shaped Pospisil's research among the Kapauku. Sympathy was a method among the Kapauku as well.

To grasp the significance of these observations, we have to return to the sad irony of West Papua's contemporary predicament: that such violence and suffering ended up springing from relationships between people who sometimes considered themselves friends. To revisit my argument from chapter 2, the warm relationships officials enjoyed with particular Papuans reflected a broader strategy: what Hume called sympathy had a central role in the officials' effort to extend their government's reach. Dutch officials had to imagine the sentiments and viewpoints of the Papuans they encountered in order to subject them to colonial governance. Like Hume, they viewed the task of "enlivening" the sympathy (and ensuring the obedience) of would-be subjects to be a key function of the state. Hume's empiricism led him to view sympathy as a material force: it emerges out of the entangle-

ment of a human apparatus with its surroundings. For Hume, sympathy entailed inference: one cannot get into others' heads or hearts; one can only read their reactions, which sets off a train of thoughts that leads one to reproduce in oneself their imagined thoughts and feelings. Sympathy was explicitly a matter of guesswork in Dutch New Guinea. Officials found the Papuans both uncannily familiar and unremittingly strange. By cultivating the idea that they were traveling in the Stone Age, they made their predicament bearable—and legible—but only just.

The parallels with anthropological practice are striking. As rapport, sympathy is a precondition for successful fieldwork. As what one might call the "ethnographic imagination," it is the capacity that enables us to produce our distinctive form of knowledge: a portrait of an experience of the world, painted from a perspective that takes in the circumstances that shape points of view. It is also the passion at the heart of the comparison of cultures. *Sympathy* is another way of denoting what philosopher Ted Cohen (2008) calls "the talent for metaphor," the human capacity to imagine one thing as another, which for Cohen includes seeing oneself as someone else. Sympathy allows anthropologists to both domesticate and flirt with alterity: in imagining oneself as another, one bumps up against the fictive nature of all identities and the irreducible otherness in oneself.

But we can go further than drawing formal comparisons between colonial and anthropological practices when it comes to Dutch New Guinea: we can see what happened to sympathy, and the savage slot, when an anthropologist arrived on the scene.

Fieldwork in the Stone Age

Of course, all this talk about entrances and arrivals is somewhat misleading. Dutch colonial officials dabbled in anthropology well before the discipline took on its current shape. De Bruijn, one will recall, wrote a doctoral thesis on Javanese archaeology. During the Japanese occupation de Bruijn had to destroy four drums filled with ethnological observations to keep them from falling

into the hands of the enemy. If his luck had been better, he would have published more than he did on Kapauku and Moni rituals and myths. De Bruijn was anything but an outlier. Dutch officials had long made it their business to document local customs, which became the basis for the Indies system of *adat* or customary law. Like British India, the Netherlands Indies conceived of itself as an "ethnographic state" (Dirks 2000 and 2001). Dutch imperialists didn't have the global ambitions that their British counterparts did, but they liked to think they were equally well-informed, if somewhat more tolerant of difference, particularly when it came in manageable forms (see Taussig 2009; Schrauwers 2000).

The Dutch tradition of social anthropology has its roots in the writings of scholar-officials. One was the government linguist F. A. E. Wouden, whose thesis on Eastern Indonesia provided fodder for J. P. B. de Josselin de Jong's theory of "circulating connubium," a mainstay of the Dutch structuralist tradition (see Fox 1989). Another was the professor and colonial adviser Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, whose magisterial studies of Islam found a ready readership among colonial leaders seeking greater knowledge of the "enemy"—that is, the religious "fanatics" they blamed for beginning the Indies' longest-running rebellion, the Aceh War. In the 1930s Dutch New Guinea had yet to serve as a setting for the kind of intensive long-term research on a single group that became the hallmark of the Anglophone variants of the discipline. But by the 1950s the time was ripe. The eastern half of the island had the Polish émigré to London Bronislaw Malinowski, whose fieldwork in the Trobriand Islands remains a model for budding American and British anthropologists (1922). It also had Reo Fortune (1932) and Margaret Mead (1935), whose work on Dobu and in the Sepik region became staples of the American culture and personality school (see Benedict 1934). New Guinea was becoming known as one of those places where generalizations about human nature went to die: generalizations about descent (witness "African Models in the New Guinea Highlands." Barnes 1962); sexuality (*Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive*

Societies, Mead 1935); and, repeatedly and exhaustively (*The Gender of the Gift*, Strathern 1988), social and economic life.

Enter Leopold Pospisil: Czech resistance fighter turned American anthropologist and a foremost authority on the ethnology of law. Pospisil served as the curator of the Anthropology Division of the Peabody Museum at Yale from 1956 until his retirement in 1993. He had received a law degree in Czechoslovakia, where he briefly worked as an attorney before fleeing communism and winding up at the University of Washington. There he wrote a master's thesis that compared hundreds of documented societies to develop a universal concept of law.[3] Pospisil saw as his mission the debunking of evolutionary theories. His main target was Sir Henry Maine, the legal theorist and architect of British colonialism, who opposed "primitive" societies governed by "status" to "modern" societies where "contractual" relations prevail. The Kapauku Papuans were his allies in this struggle. "I have lectures," Pospisil told me in an interview in 2003, "where I topple with this Kapauku material lots of theories. Durkheim, Sir Henry Maine, all no good. Because the facts of Kapauku refute them."

Pospisil became acquainted with these facts—and the Wissel Lakes—in 1954 after coming to a series of dead ends is his quest to "check the effectiveness" of his theory (Pospisil 1972, 145). "I wanted to see some people who hadn't seen white men. Not exposed to Western civilization. Not even colonized," he told me. The kinship theorist G. P. Murdoch advised Pospisil to try Dutch New Guinea. And so he arrived in the colony's capital, Hollandia (now Jayapura), where he looked up Murdoch's friend, the anthropologist Jan van Baal. Van Baal had written a doctoral dissertation on headhunting in southern Dutch New Guinea, where he had served as an official, and went on to become a key figure in Dutch anthropology. At the time he had just become governor of the province.[4] Van Baal arranged for Pospisil to meet Jan Victor de Bruijn, who was then the colony's chief of Native Affairs. De Bruijn tried to persuade Pospisil to do research among the recently "discovered" Dani because "they have nice structure, groups, hierarchies." "Kapauku have mishmash,"

Pospisil recalled de Bruijn telling him. "That's all. . . . There is somebody they call 'tonowi,' but this is *primus inter pares*. He has no power and what not." "Well, I said, 'I have a theory of law that says law is universal,'" Pospisil responded. "'And so I would be more interested in Kapauku than in the Dani.' So it was Kapauku."

This is, of course, the sort of entry story that many anthropologists of Pospisil's generation could tell, consisting of a series of accidents and lucky tips from friends of friends.[5] Remember, this was a colony that had an anthropologist serving as governor. In Netherlands New Guinea, as in the Netherlands Indies, the Dutch prided themselves on their expertise in native culture, which they used to rule in ways they viewed as more effective and humane than other colonial styles. This talent was particularly needed at the moment when Pospisil arrived in Netherlands New Guinea. Not only would a study like Pospisil's provide the government with useful information; it also would provide concrete backing for the claim that the Papuans and the Indonesians were culturally distinct.[6] Pospisil needed the Stone Age to prove his theory that law existed everywhere. The Dutch needed research by scholars like Pospisil, whose very presence in the territory confirmed the fact that Dutch New Guinea was indeed a Stone Age land. A sympathetic conjunction of interests helped reinforce the Stone Age image of New Guinea at a time when Indonesian leaders were protesting the Netherlands' continued colonization of the Papuans, whom they depicted as compatriots in chains.

And so Pospisil arrived in the Kamu Valley in November 1954 and set up shop. An amphibious plane deposited him in Enarotali.[7] A police officer and two hundred natives "joined the procession" to Pospisil's field site, reminiscent of the large crowds that had accompanied de Bruijn and other colonial officials on their journeys. In the village of Botukebo he built a house, hired houseboys—or, more precisely, agreed to adopt them—and gathered data on the Kapauku legal system. In the course of doing so, he collected enough material for an exhaustive monograph

on the Kapauku economy. Let's turn to Pospisil's fieldwork and what was made of it by Pospisil and, apparently, by the Kapauku themselves.

Primitive Capitalists, or How the Kapauku Taught Pospisil How to Count

Sometimes you can judge a book by its cover. Consider the second edition of Pospisil's *Ethnology of Law* (1978). The front features a black-and-white photograph depicting a bare-chested man wearing a penis sheath with a net bag suspended from his forehead. He is standing erect, leaning slightly forward. His right arm is extended, palm down, in a stylized pointing gesture. Another man, sitting on the ground with two women, is looking in the direction the standing man is pointing. Inside the book, under the copyright information, one finds a caption: "Cover photo: One of several plaintiffs in the trial *Ijaaj Bunaibomuuma vs. Ijaaj Pigome-Confederacy* argues in favor of the death penalty for the defendant. Ijaaj-Pigome Confederacy, Kamu Valley, West New Guinea (Irian Jaya), Indonesia, July 14, 1955." The setting was, of course, neither Irian Jaya nor Indonesia at the time Pospisil, who was presumably the photographer, took the picture. On the books, the territory was Dutch. And yet the photograph and the caption work together to create a very different impression for the American reader: they might look different, but the Kapauku R Us.

The Ethnology of Law, like Pospisil's monographs, registers the workings of sympathy as an anthropological technology that operates in both the conceptual and the practical realms.[8] Pospisil's Kapauku would seem to have little in common with the inhabitants of "System M," as Alfred Gell (1999, 29–75) dubbed the Melanesian world that Marilyn Strathern conjured in a thought experiment meant to call into question the universality of Western categories. *Kapauku Papuans and Their Law* (1958) and *Kapauku Papuan Economy* (1972) don't just smuggle Eurocentric concepts into their analyses; they wear them proudly. And yet

when one reads Pospisil's work carefully, this trait becomes less regrettable than curious. It's one thing to carve out "law" or "economy" from the complexities of social life in process. It's another to encourage American readers to see a stereotypically Stone Age figure as a plaintiff in a case. The caption could be serious, or it could be tongue in cheek. But one thing's for sure: it isn't naive. Something beyond universalism brought together this image and these words.

Behind the English, Pospisil would insist, is Kapauku—Kapauku language to be precise. Pospisil refused to learn to speak Indonesian, which served as the administrative language of Dutch New Guinea. It's not clear whether he ever needed to learn to speak Dutch. "My students, all of them speak the language," Pospisil told me. "Of the people they studied. No lingua franca, no interpreters allowed."[9] Pospisil's fluency in Kapauku far outstripped that of van Eechoud or de Bruijn. Yet his strategy for conducting research was not unlike their strategy for governing. They all saw sympathizing with the Papuans as a first step toward getting things done.

Posposil got things done, first and foremost, through his intimate acquaintance with his houseboys. Over the course of his fieldwork, fifty boys and half a dozen girls asked to join his household. He regarded them as his adopted sons and daughters. In addition to cleaning and cooking, a few became his paid research assistants—or, in his words, "spies"—bringing him the backstory on legal cases along with information on his neighbors' wealth, which allowed him to construct a quantitative description of the local economy (Pospisil 1972, 26). In *Kapauku Papuan Economy*, Pospisil presents a remarkable array of data. The book ends with tables listing everything from the name, sex, age, and marital status of every resident of Botukebo, where Pospisil conducted the study, to the composition of soil samples from the Kamu Valley.[10] Pospisil is able to compare various individuals' wealth and arrive at an estimation of the overall size of the economy by deploying definitional sleights of hand: wives and gardens are "fixed assets," for instance; shells are "liquid assets," as are pigs. Pigs feature as

the engine of a "magical" cycle of production that yields profits to aspiring *tonowi*, a term that Pospisil glosses not as "big man" but as "businessman" or even "entrepreneur." Pospisil succeeded at this feat of comparison by taking part in this local quest for status. In attaching themselves to his household, his houseboys were following prevailing practice: they were apprenticing themselves to the wealthiest individual in their surroundings in hopes of obtaining credit and lucrative skills, which would enable them to acquire pigs and wives to take care of them. Pospisil had to become a tonowi in order to learn how tonowi are made.

But this merging of passions and perspectives goes even further. Pospisil not only drew upon Kapauku customs in collecting his data; he emulated Kapauku interests in selecting what kind of data to obtain. No description of Pospisil's field site is complete without a mention of what he clearly experienced as the Kapauku's most striking trait: their passion for quantification. The houseboys' favorite leisure activity was counting the shells in Pospisil's kitty. At the end of this operation they would present Pospisil with a reckoning that informed him of when he would need to replenish his supply. Pospisil once showed a group of Kapauku a photograph from an American fashion magazine. Instead of admiring the pretty model, they counted her teeth.[11] An old tonowi visiting the government center on Biak had no interest in the landmarks Pospisil showed him; he was too busy estimating the town's population by counting the people he saw on the street. Kapauku companions happily brought Pospisil the numbers that enabled him to "topple" established truths.

The biggest established truth he toppled was the presupposition that "primitive" people were "communistic."[12] Here's how Pospisil describes the "exciting life" of Jokagaibo, a young tonowi who was always "on the move": "His schedule was filled with business appointments; supervision of his gardens, which were made for him by hired labor; surprise visits to custodians of his pigs; and more prolonged departures on trade expeditions to faraway places. There was quite a bit of tension in his exciting life, so closely resembling that of the Western businessman. I sometimes

wondered if the man would not develop ulcers or heart condition" (Pospisil 1972, 388). But the Kapauku didn't just resemble Western capitalists; they outstripped them.

> With the emphasis on wealth, money, and trade Kapauku combine a strong version of individualism which, I daresay, could hardly be surpassed in our capitalistic society. . . . Common ownership to a Kapauku is simply inconceivable. Wife and husband have separate property, and so does a boy of even twelve years old. . . . The individual differences in wealth and food consumption among the Kapauku are overwhelming. Among our Papuans there is no collective action that would keep individuals from starving. (Pospisil 1972, 403, 404)[13]

There is a funhouse quality to the world Pospisil describes—a stretching and distorting of capitalist traits. Here's Pospisil's description of "our own traditionally capitalistic society as it would be under the Kapauku":

> The richest man in the United States would control, informally of course, the price levels and nationwide distribution of credit. Furthermore, of necessity he would hold not only the office of President of the United States, but at the same time he would have to be the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Since the political as well as legal offices among the Kapauku are cumulative, an American president, instituted according to the Kapauku public law, would also simultaneously hold the offices of governor of the largest state, and mayor of the largest city of that state; he would also be president of the most important court of law at every level of inclusiveness in the United States hierarchy of courts. I can also state that, compared to the Kapauku situation, the role of wealth in Western capitalism dwindles to pitiful insignificance. (Pospisil 1972, 381–82)

Of course, given the role of money in American politics, Pospisil may be overdrawing the contrast. Be that as it may, this conceit is different from that of Bijlmer and other adventurers, who described touching moments when the Stone Age Papuans looked just like Dutch relatives and friends. "Under the Kapauku" potentially launches a subversive flight of fancy. Pospisil's Kapauku world is one that forces us to see the colonizer from the colonized's perspective. The Kapauku were, in fact, "under the Dutch"

when Pospisil conducted his research—indeed, that's what made this research possible. But in Pospisil's Kapauku world, we are invited to turn the tables and imagine the United States running by Stone Age rules.

In this passage, the racial hierarchy that sustained Dutch colonialism seems to come unmoored. Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to make too much of this reversal. Pospisil insisted on the universality of law and economy, refusing to accept the conceit that people like the Kapauku were the "other" of the modern West. And yet the power of people like the Kapauku to topple worn dichotomies depended on their status as "untouched" by the West. The image of Kapauku "business" would be neither consequential nor compelling without the presumption that these natives were still, as it were, living in the Stone Age. One has to look through the savage slot to see the funhouse mirror.

Pospisil didn't manage to escape the savage slot, let alone destroy it.[14] And yet as I have suggested, what Trouillot calls the "residual of historical experience" is legible between the lines of his books.[15] Late in our interview, Pospisil and I talked about the notion that there are people who live in the Stone Age and that they all are the same. "But when you learn the language and have best friends, and then be accepted into the Eiya Clan, no? And old Amitea [his best friend] looked at me, and he said, 'You know when I look at you, you really look like an Eiyai.' [Laughs.] I came home and looked in the mirror. Had I changed?" Pospisil turned sympathy into a research method: the outcome was a vision of Kapauku as capitalists. For Amitea, sympathy was a life strategy: the outcome was a vision of the anthropologist as a "friend" whose very body marked him as a member of the clan. What kind of impression did this mingling of embodied identifications make on Pospisil? Predictably, like so many of us who work in West Papua, Pospisil supports the Papuan struggle for self-determination. Yet his affinity with the Kapauku runs deeper than that. How did the Kapauku teach Pospisil not simply how to count but also *what* to count—what to count as objects of his concern?

The Incalculable

One thing that must count as an object of my concern in addressing these questions is the swarm of interactions out of which Pospisil's data were made. Pospisil's writings are best approached as performances. In the previous chapter I explained how Dutch officials held weapons demonstrations to reestablish the opposition between the colonizers and the colonized at moments when their dependency on the Papuans blurred the boundary. Ethnography, like riflery, entails a ritualized set of actions that produces what physicist and feminist theorist Karen Barad (2010) calls an "ontological cut." Pospisil's representational practices work to establish a division between a subject and an object: the anthropologist who writes or speaks and the Kapauku who is described. And yet this border is permeable. Irony haunts Pospisil's data, an irony that reveals something inscrutable, indeed incalculable, which dogs the effort to say "this" is "that."

Consider again Pospisil's description of the houseboys with their passion for bookkeeping. Pospisil contains their passion in the never-never land of the ethnographic present: these Kapauku are Stone Age "businessmen," procrustean entrepreneurs. And yet it's not clear that Pospisil's houseboys accepted this incarceration. As I have noted, *ogai* is the word the descendants of Pospisil's Kapauku use to refer to foreigners. They also use it for people from their own group who have attached themselves to outsiders, with the houseboys being the perfect example. Tonowi, one might say, were a subset of ogai, even if the former term no doubt predated the latter, which seems to have come into currency during the first expeditions to the region. Tonowi were individuals who stood out by profiting from the abundance that derived from the growth of pigs and the flow of shells. The arrival of outsiders to the region opened new opportunities for this pursuit.[16] In doing so, they changed the conditions of the game: there are now few tonowi, but there are plenty of ogai. Ogai do not appear in Pospisil's book—or at least they aren't labeled as such—for good reason, since their presence would disrupt Pospi-

sil's founding presumption that the Kapauku were a people "who had never seen white men."[17] When it comes to capturing the role of these intermediaries in his research, Pospisil's facts meet their limit. Pospisil's companions were imagining themselves as foreigners at the same time he was imagining himself as them. Facts don't hold still in such a situation. It is hard to say who was studying—or sympathizing with—whom.

I can't take you back to the Kamu Valley, but I can offer you a glimpse of how complicated this scene of fieldwork would have been. As I have mentioned, some of the facts I have educed in this chapter derive from a long conversation I had with Pospisil in 2003. My transcript from the interview is embedded in my fieldnotes on a day I spent in New York, then New Haven, with the well-known Papuan activist Octovianus Mote. A present-day ogai, Octo is the grandson of the Kapauku leader Weakebo, who befriended both van Eechoud and de Bruijn. I attended a talk given by Octo in the morning at Columbia University's Weatherhead Center for International Relations, where he laid out the history of the conflict in West Papua and described the predicaments of those involved in the struggle for self-determination. Octo arranged for me to meet with Pospisil that night.[18]

Octo led me into Pospisil's large New Haven home, past a coat of armor to the parlor, where the three of us talked over tea and cake. The following snippet is from the part of the interview when we discussed Pospisil's last visit to West Papua. At the time Pospisil's friends in the Kamu Valley were bearing the brunt of the brutal military campaigns in the highlands that accompanied West Papua's integration into Indonesia. Some of them had joined the Free Papua Organization, or OPM, a guerrilla group fighting for Papuan independence.

POSPISIL: I came to the Kapauku in 1975 and 1979, and I found out that they were fighting against Indonesia. As a matter of fact, one Kapauku took a gun and shot into an airplane, and in the Cessna there was a pilot and a commanding chief of the general staff. Top military man. And he shot and killed the pilot. But the pilot crash landed. So the guy survived.

OCTO: Exactly. They were just lucky because distances between Enaro, Waghete, where they were shot, and Nabire are not far. So the airplane landed, and the gas was out, and just cannot move.

DANILYN: So they made it the whole way to Nabire? That's incredible.

POSPISIL: Came and shot the pilot! And I came in and they—my friends, and my sons grown up already—said, "You know, it is wonderful, your lectures to us. You lectured to us how you were in the underground." I said yes. "And we are doing the same thing with Indonesia!" My god. Don't tell Indonesia. Because I wouldn't be able.

DANILYN: The OPM, the Stone Age warriors, no, in fact is modeled on the Czech underground! I like that!

POSPISIL: Like I told him. I just, he was in ambush, so he tied a rope to a bush and strung it, and he went to the other side, or somewhere, and was lying in ambush. And the guy came, and the bush started rattling. He looked at that and bingo.

OCTO: That's what they did in Biademi, the war in 1968 when my uncle Senin Mote, Mapia Mote, led the war. That is exactly—they all used this kind of thing. And they killed a lot of Indonesian military. They killed a lot. Exactly what you are saying. I was just kind of "Really, how did these people learn this?"

POSPISIL: There was a column. I was thinking of Indonesia at this time, it was still under the Dutch. There was a . . . column of Germans or whatnot. So you always let the column pass. Never attack the front. And once they pass, in the back. You kill five, ten people, disappear, run away. And circle and lie in ambush again. Three hundred meters farther down. And you do the same thing. Pretty soon there is no column. And so they did that too.

OCTO: That's exactly . . .

POSPISIL: We have a bow and arrow, you know. Bow and arrow is better because you don't hear anything. And before they find out that they are being slaughtered from the back, there are several people dead.

OCTO: And that's really something that I never figured out, how they learned. Because that was amazing. They really, because I was as an elementary student when all my uncles go war in Beademi and all the Kamu area in 1968, that was really . . . They won a lot. That's why Suharto finally sent Typhoons to Papua. Because they cannot through the . . .

DANILYN: Yes, because you think of people who really know the landscape and the terrain . . .

The snippet mashes up three genres of conversation: the ethnographic interview, the advocacy meeting, and the trip down memory lane. Consider what the three of us are up to. I'm looking to debunk the notion of the Stone Age; Pospisil is establishing his credentials as a supporter of Papuan self-determination; Octo is celebrating the solution to a mystery and creating a bond between the movement and the international community, which is so critical to its success. I double back to a classical way of thinking about the Papuans' armed resistance—they evade capture because they are indigenous and "close to the land." Octo insists on something more inscrutable: the kernel of Czech history that accounts for his ancestors' feats. Pospisil, for his part, ends up blending into a Kapauku "we." Pospisil's retold tale launches a spiraling flight of the imagination in which Octo pictures his ancestors as World War II resistance fighters, and Pospisil pictures himself as akin to a Kapauku warrior, complete with arrows and a bow. We still feel ripples from Pospisil's fieldwork.[19] I'm hit by one and slip back into the perspective I'm trying to critique. "Yes, because you think of people who really know the landscape and the terrain," I say: the romance of the indigenous, the romance of the Stone Age—that's what guides my response.

What lies beyond calculation—beyond easy equivalents—becomes evident in messy moments of fieldwork like this, which led the three of us each to find something foreign in ourselves. Our sympathies coincided and worked at cross-purposes. It was a matter not only of perspective but also of passion: we caught each other's enthusiasm even as we experienced it as our own. Our encounter blurred the boundary between the modern and the primitive, the scholar and the activist, the body and the mind. We can imagine the same thing happening in Pospisil's encounters with Kapauku, encounters that both reproduced and undermined the Stone Age image of New Guinea. Pospisil's methods left him imaginatively infected by his informants' plight, even if, like so

many of us who study West Papua, he was able to retreat to a safe distance from the peril in which the Papuans found themselves after he left. When sympathy became a technology in Dutch New Guinea, savagery was never far behind. But sympathy is a double-edged sword.

Beyond Comparison

Of all the participants in this drama, those who have come closest to escaping the savage slot may be the current inhabitants of what was once the Wissel Lakes, which is now the Indonesian district of Paniai, named after the largest of the lakes. They have managed to persuade outsiders to call them by their real name—Me—but they are still the ones who have suffered most from the fact that the slot still persists. In August 2003 I boarded an airplane belonging to the Indonesia military to climb from the coastal city of Nabire to Paniai's capital, which is still called Enarotali. I was on my way to Enarotali in hopes of meeting people who remembered the Dutch expeditions I had been reading about and to hear more about the history of the word *ogai*. Like it or not, I knew people would assume I was collecting data on traditional culture, and I'd hear lots about pig feasts, bridewealth, and other topics associated with the savage slot.

After climbing over a bag of rice, I sat down next to a Papuan working as a civil servant for Indonesia. We chatted in Indonesian, and he told me he was from Paniai. I looked away to buckle my seatbelt, and he and another passenger shared some pleasantries in Javanese. He later explained that he'd been adopted into the family of a Javanese soldier, who had put him through school. And yet he insisted upon his support for the Papuan struggle for self-determination, still at a high point three years after a groundbreaking congress attended by thousands of delegates. He was precisely the sort of person I wanted to talk to during my short visit to Paniai, and yet our discussions branched off in unexpected directions: Me culture and kinship, which in his case included having multiple wives. The things I was least

interested in—those savage slot topics—turned out to be the things I needed to hear about most.

When the plane landed, the Biak woman whom an adopted relative had recruited to look after me passed me off to two local activists sent by my contact in Jayapura, a Papuan intellectual who is himself descended from the people Pospisil studied.[20] We stopped at the police station and then climbed a steep hill through Enarotali's flower-lined streets to a spare room in the main office of their organization, which overlooked the lake and the mountains. And so began three whirlwind days of conversation. Among the people I spoke with there was broad support for Papuan independence, and yet the older people recalled a time when people in the region didn't think of themselves as Papuan at all.[21] People used the term *ogai* to refer to individuals who became civil servants, teachers, or other educated professionals; and yet the term *tonowi* was still in vogue.

I traveled to an outlying village over the steep, rough, and dusty trans-Irian "highway" to meet one of these traditional leaders. He was a polygamist, with five wives, like his father, who had also been a tonowi. He had great wealth in the form of pigs. But before he had become a tonowi, he'd been a classic kind of ogai—a pastor of the Protestant church who doubled as headman of his village—not to mention having joined the armed resistance for several tense years when fighting in the district had exploded. He'd given up his position as pastor—and his adherence to monogamy—after a dispute with the church leadership over what language to use in services. The church leadership was jealous of his ability to preach in Indonesian, and so they refused to appoint him to a congregation where he could build his career. As the tonowi told his story, he was less traditional than his rivals—and this is precisely what had resulted in his eventually assuming a supposedly Stone Age role. We could say that the Stone Age was this modern man's preferred future rather than his benighted past.

A refrain I heard repeatedly during my visit helps to make sense of the pastor-turned-businessman's story: "We had ev-

erything at the very start." My informants' main example was the Ten Commandments—we already had them when the missionaries arrived, they said, echoing Pospisil's contention that everyone has law. Yet the tone of amusement that runs through Pospisil's juxtaposition of Stone Age bodies and modern legal terms was missing from their depictions of a prior plenitude. This became clearest to me on my final day in Enatorali, when students from the school run by the activists held a presentation for me. An older man provided a running commentary as students came forward to demonstrate traditional arts and crafts—songs, dances, food, houses, adornment, currency, law. At the end of each performance, he announced, "Sudah ada"—Indonesian for "everything was already here." Outsiders had brought them nothing of value, he concluded; if anything, they took things away.

Including lives. The other refrain repeated throughout my visit spoke of darker things. A young woman sought me out to tell me her story, which I captured in my field notes.

> When she was in the third grade of SMP [junior high school], the conflict between Indonesia and the local people heated up. Right in front of her, she saw people being killed. Her older sibling, an old person, was killed by having a hot pole pushed through his anus out his mouth; she saw an older sister being raped. . . . It is important for the Me to educate themselves so they can develop their culture, "the distinctive identity of the Me tribe." Now they are like leaves in the water—floating back and forth, without clear direction. She thinks it would be best to return to "our initial state."

Among the descendants of Pospisil's Kapauku, the Stone Age was still "in full bloom," to quote the words of one Dutch explorer. But it was not located where one might expect. It lived on in the imaginations of soldiers who mimicked the supposed barbarism of the locals. These locals presented themselves as descendants of people who were not the mirror image of anyone. They refused to be other to anyone but themselves.

Trouillot ended his essay with a call for "a fair tally of the knowledge anthropologists have produced in the past, sometimes

in spite of themselves and almost always in spite of the savage slot." "We owe it to ourselves," he wrote, "to ask what remains of anthropology and of specific monographs when we remove this slot—not to revitalize disciplinary tradition through cosmetic surgery, but to build both an epistemology and a semiology of what anthropologists have done and can do" (1991, 39).[22] Can anthropology escape the savage slot? Only by attending to what makes sympathy both imperative and impossible: the entanglement of singular histories and lives.

FIGURE 10. Father Tillemans indicates to an Ekari Papuan that a camera is present. 1936. National Museum of World Cultures. Coll. no. TM 10032916.

6

The Ethics of Kinky Empiricism

It is time for anthropology to reclaim the empirical. But this reclaiming must be accompanied by a rethinking of what empiricism means. What I have tried to affirm in this book is a kind of empiricism that builds on the singular power of anthropological ways of knowing the world. A kinky empiricism: kinky, like a Slinky twisting back on itself, but also kinky like S&M and other queer elaborations of established scenarios, relationships, and things. An empiricism that admits that one never gets to the bottom of things, yet that also accepts and even celebrates the disavowals required of us given a world that forces us to act. An empiricism that is ethical because its methods create obligations, obligations that compel those who seek knowledge to put themselves on the line by making truth claims that they know will intervene within the settings and among the people they describe.

There are several reasons why now is a good time for anthropologists to insist on the empirical nature of what they do. The new kinds of interchanges in which anthropologists are now engaged create obligations of a particularly pressing sort. We work in war zones (Marsden 2016), factory farms (Blanchette 2015; Lien 2015), blasted landscapes (Tsing 2015), and deathly borderlands (Deleon 2015), among First Nation peoples (Simpson 2014) and in vulnerable communities throughout the world (Bear

2015; Fennell 2015). There is a price of admission to the politically fraught arenas that anthropologists are increasingly entering. As I have learned from my work in West Papua, paying this price can require us to write and speak authoritatively on issues that matter to the people we have studied. But all too often, anthropology has appeared to outsiders as having a tangential relationship to the empirical, producing knowledge that is too partial, too particular, too relativistic or theoretical to bear on real-world questions. However mistaken, such views reflect the long shadow cast by the 1980s, a time when many anthropologists developed new allegiances in the humanities. In reclaiming the empirical for anthropology, we must contend with the legacy of this époque in the discipline's development. Indeed, it is in writings that have been demonized for steering anthropology away from "reality" that one finds the clearest expression of the epistemology that is implicitly embraced by the best practitioners of the discipline. These writings make the case for a kinky kind of empiricism, an empiricism that takes seriously the situated nature of what all thinkers do.

Sometimes to find the way forward, one must begin by looking back. In the first half of this chapter I move beyond Dutch New Guinea to consider two sources for the ingredients for the kinky empiricism that I would like to affirm as a critical dimension of contemporary anthropology. The first is *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Clifford and Marcus 1986), which, I argue, helped add to the phenomena open to anthropological inquiry by foregrounding the circumstances of ethnography. This highly influential—and controversial—collection of essays is widely understood to have changed the face of anthropology—or, at the very least, directed it inward—by casting light on the forces that shape cultural representation. The second is the work of David Hume, who has been one of my theoretical companions in this book. Hume's epistemology, I argue, proves surprisingly resonant with the empiricism implicitly endorsed in *Writing Culture*. Following the lead of Gilles Deleuze, Brian Massumi, and others who have read Hume in new ways, I

consider how this eighteenth-century philosopher, like *Writing Culture*'s contributors, sketched out an empiricism that was both skeptical and ethical because it included among its objects of inquiry the apparatuses through which reality is known.

My aim is not simply descriptive; it is also polemical. Kinky empiricism is a position I would like anthropology to embrace. But it is also a position that brings with it dangers as well as possibilities. In the final section of this chapter I return to Dutch New Guinea and the pitfalls of ways of knowing that anthropologists and colonial officials have shared. I end by considering a recent ethnography that responds to these dangers and possibilities in a particularly compelling way. Kinky empiricism is always slightly off-kilter, always aware of the slipperiness of its grounds and of the difficulty of adequately responding to the ethical demands spawned by its methods. Being off-kilter is a strength, not a weakness. For anthropology, it is what comes with getting real.

Backward Look 1

In the 1980s, the potted history of our discipline goes, anthropology turned left while its sister disciplines turned right. Significant subgroups within psychology, political science, economics, and sociology began adopting mathematical models and quantitative methods, and crafted experiments aimed at producing generalizable findings. Anthropology, for its part, looked inward, producing self-indulgent, jargon-strewn texts that only the initiated could understand. Silliness ruled the day. "I've talked enough about me," the "postmodern" anthropologist in the famous joke says to an informant. "What do you think about me?" "What's the difference between a gangster and a postmodernist?" another joke goes. "A postmodernist makes you an offer you can't understand." For purveyors of this potted history, the move toward dialogue and partial truths represented a retreat from empirical research—above all from the kind of empirical research on colonized and formerly colonized peoples and cultures for which the discipline long was known. And when anthropology did finally

come to its senses, the potted history goes on, it turned its attention to colonialism and science: the peoples and cultures that gave birth to anthropology. The fervor of the 1980s left anthropology unauthorized to claim to know others; the best we could do was know ourselves.

I do not believe in this potted history, even though it was foisted on me at a tender disciplinary age. (The second person to introduce me to anthropology was Steve Sangren, a Marxist anthropologist of the Terry Turner persuasion who wrote a critique of *Writing Culture* and other "postmodern" works that appeared in *Current Anthropology* shortly before I arrived at Cornell [1988]. The first person to introduce me to anthropology was Jim Siegel, a student of Clifford Geertz who was so idiosyncratic in his orientation to the discipline that the first course I took, Political Anthropology, had a syllabus consisting exclusively of serialized novels in colonial Malay.)[1] This potted history makes me squirm whenever I confront it, which is usually in conversations with other social scientists. It's way too easy to get sucked into the narrative. "But we've left those bad old days behind!" I find myself saying. "We're doing all kinds of hard-nosed work!" When we open *Writing Culture* and actually read it, a different view of the "bad old days" comes into focus. *Writing Culture* provides a warrant for an anthropological empiricism that takes on more reality, not less.

The reality taken on by *Writing Culture* takes two forms. On the one hand, the chapters in the collection extend outward the range of empirical phenomena open to inquiry and criticize ethnographers who have limited their studies' scope by failing to consider the broader circumstances of fieldwork. Renato Rosaldo (1986) discusses the pacification campaigns undertaken in the Sudan shortly before Evans-Pritchard contracted "Nueritis" trying to extract information about local politics from his understandably reticent Nuer informants. Vincent Crapanzano (1986) criticizes Clifford Geertz's famous essay on the Balinese cockfight for failing to provide enough empirical evidence to substan-

tiate Geertz's claims. "We must go further" is a refrain repeated throughout *Writing Culture*—we must say more about the intellectual settings and professional imperatives that are shaping our discipline, Paul Rabinow (1986) tells us (see also Marcus 1986a); we must say more about the interplay of social phenomena on different levels and scales, George Marcus (1986b) insists. This dimension of *Writing Culture* reflects what I see as a key strength of the discipline. Because we don't set the parameters of admissible data from the get-go, anthropologists are arguably able to be more empirical than social scientists constrained by survey instruments and the need for large samples. We sacrifice what statisticians call statistical validity, but we gain construct validity: a higher level of confidence that we are doing justice to a messy reality. *Writing Culture* queers this second kind of validity. The chapters reveal a kinky penchant for thoroughly specifying the messy reality with which anthropologists are concerned.

On the other hand, the chapters in *Writing Culture* also, more famously, extend the range of empirical phenomena open to inquiry inward toward the research and writing process itself (see Clifford 1986a and 1986b; Fischer 1986; Tyler 1986). Taking the quest for construct validity to an extreme, *Writing Culture*'s empiricism becomes kinky in a second sense: this empiricism loops back on itself. In bringing ethnography's dialogic character clearly into view, the collection raises ethical questions about the enterprise, questions to which some contributors responded by calling for writing practices that more fully represented informants' voices in a work. In the years since *Writing Culture* was published, linguistic anthropologists have provided us with a sophisticated understanding of the issues raised by the book's kinky obsession with reflexivity (see Lucy 1993; Silverstein 1976). As *Writing Culture*'s authors knew well, dialogue never happens between just two sides (see Bakhtin 1981; see also Feldman 1991; Keane 1997).[2]

Bearing the traces of long histories of interaction, dialogue also never happens in just one setting but, rather, requires the

bringing into relevance of institutions that authorize, valorize, and lend prestige to speakers' words (see Silverstein 2004; see also Agha 2007). Dialogue is always fraught with ethical conundrums. To converse is to engage in an exchange of gestures. To exchange is to receive, and to receive is to confront the impossible demand to give others their due. For anthropologists, the conundrums multiply. Fieldwork generates both debts and identities in the back-and-forth through which interlocutors create a sense of what they are up to and who they are. Anthropologists find themselves compelled to do right by a cultural other that fades into a specter as soon as they think hard about what they do.[3] This second dimension of kinky empiricism—its Slinky effect, as we might call it—eats away at certainty as well as good conscience. When anthropologists look closely at their own research practices, it becomes clear that partial truths are the best they can do.

What I see as the most important contribution of *Writing Culture* is this coupling of the empirical and the ethical. What I have described as two realities are really just aspects of one: the messy reality in which ethnography lives. Unfortunately, readers of the collection haven't always recognized that for *Writing Culture* looking outward and looking inward are two sides of the same kinky coin.[4] To some degree, *Writing Culture*'s authors and contributors were complicit in perpetrating this view, adding references to empirical "standards" almost as an afterthought. In fact, there is nothing inconsistent or incoherent about the implicit epistemology articulated in *Writing Culture*. The reflexive turn in anthropology has expanded, rather than contracted, the discipline's power to represent reality. The ethical challenges that have come out of this recognition are indicative of how much more, rather than less, anthropology is trying to say about the empirical world. I think we can do a better job of defining and defending this dimension of our discipline. But this may require yet another look backward—to an early champion of empiricism, a thinker whom at least one contributor to *Writing Culture* may have too hastily dismissed.

Backward Look 2

Although I haven't belabored this fact, informed readers will recognize that Hume is an odd fit for this book. Eighteenth-century philosopher, friend of Adam Smith, "a man of letters and, in a mild manner, a man of affairs," as one biographer puts it, David Hume would seem an odd patron saint for today's anthropologists (see MacNabb 1962 [1738], 28). Born in 1711, Hume entered Edinburgh University at the age of ten and encountered the writings of John Locke as a teenager before decamping for France. There, in his early twenties, he wrote his magnificent flop *A Treatise of Human Nature* and made friends with Jean-Jacques Rousseau, whom he "imported to England" and provided with a house, a dog, a mistress, and a pension from the king. "But nothing would persuade Rousseau that Hume was not secretly plotting his ridicule and humiliation," D. G. C. Macnabb [1962 (1738), 28–29] reports. "The relationship ended in a spectacular quarrel. In self-justification, Hume was forced to publish the correspondence, from which it is abundantly clear that the only man who ever hated Hume was mad." Hume himself never married, preferring to live with his sister and a cat. Whatever Hume's erotic proclivities—he seems less kinky than quirky by this account—his thinking clearly had twists.[5] Giving with one hand and taking with the other, leading the careful reader on a conceptual loop, Hume proclaimed that all knowledge begins in experience. But he also argued that we have no real reason to trust experience or to believe that what has happened in the past provides a basis for predicting what is to come.

Hume was, among other things, an epistemologist, and hence a proponent of a breed of thinking dismissed in Paul Rabinow's chapter in *Writing Culture* as "an accidental, but eventually sterile, turning in Western culture" (Rabinow 1986, 234). But as Gilles Deleuze (1991 [1954]) and Brian Massumi (2002) have suggested, Hume's work may be more generative than Rabinow would lead us to think. I find it useful to read Hume's work as fodder for an exercise in reverse engineering. If we begin with

the view of thought advocated by Rabinow (1986, 234) in his chapter—as "nothing more or less than a historically locatable set of practices"—what kind of mechanism do we need to envision such that thought and the subjectivity of the thinker could both be, in Deleuze's words, "constituted in the given" (1991, 104)? Whether or not we call it epistemology, a tacit understanding of how this might work weaves its way through our research in the wake of *Writing Culture*. Hume is perhaps less useful in telling us what we *should* think than shedding light on what we *do* think when we are making the most of our methods: the kinky empiricist background assumptions that structure knowledge production in our field.

Two of Hume's terms provide useful tools for grasping these background assumptions. The first is the notion of circumstances, which relates to the first form of reality addressed by *Writing Culture*: the one that comes into focus when one takes in the broader contexts that shape what anthropologists find in the field. Hume is famous for his account of what he calls "moral reasoning," a category that encompasses the lion's share of thought, which, with the sole exception of certain problems in mathematics, proceeds through inference (see Hume 1962 [1738] and 1988 [1748]; see also Deleuze 1991). Inference, for Hume, is an interpretive practice that reads the unfolding of events as signs of what once was and what is to come. Inference, like all sign use, cannot occur in a vacuum. Interpretation is an imaginative form of conduct in which what Hume calls the "fancy" moves along grooves established by previous encounters with the world. In describing the aggregated effect of these encounters, Hume draws on the notion of circumstances. Circumstances consist of the patterned distribution of happenings that makes it more or less probable that a certain person will have certain experiences. Circumstances shape the expectations that lead particular people to read a particular cause or effect as standing behind a particular event.

But Hume goes further than the contributors to *Writing Culture* did in exploring how circumstances influence what people

think and do. (I already covered some of this ground in an earlier chapter, but for my purposes here it's worth sharpening the point.) The solid ground of Hume's empiricism grows shaky when he considers the process through which experiences give rise to expectations. Hume asserts that the ability to infer is adaptive: it is the basis not only for science and technology but also for government, civil society, and domestic life. Yet he also does much to show that the practice of inference has no logical rationale. The mind-fuck moment in Hume's writings comes when he argues that the legitimacy of our inferences stands or falls on the assumption that events will have the same kind of causes and consequences in the future as they did in the past (see Hume 1988 [1748]). There is no way of adducing evidence in support of this assumption because it is the assumption on which the very notion of evidence rests. (Pause. Think about it!) If we believe in the evidence of our senses, it is because of what Hume calls a "principle of human nature," "custom," which Hume describes as a quasi-organic variety of the repetition compulsion that drives us to wait for a "tock" following every "tick" (see Hume 1962 [1738]; see also Deleuze 1991 [1953] and 1994). Unlike philosophers who draw a distinction between mind and body, Hume finds passion at the heart of reason. Rational thought draws on the same organic forces that drive hunger, lust, and the beating of hearts. Along with fellow feeling, reason is less sublime than lizard brained.

The same tendency both to trust experience and to undermine it runs through *Writing Culture*'s critique of the anthropology of its day. Something like Hume's notion of circumstances makes an appearance throughout the book. The contributors' point is not that anything goes when it comes to interpreting ethnographic data. Their point is that what does go is, to quote Paul Rabinow again, "historically locatable." Interpretations follow grooves laid in the imaginations of individuals and institutions by virtue of their pathways through space and time. Notably, interpretations follow grooves left by what Hume (1962 [1738]) calls "artifices":

technologies for regulating the imagination, which for Hume include both police forces and books. What Hume adds to this approach is the proposal that among the circumstances that matter is the form of the organism that thinks. The process of interpretation is anything but dispassionate. Thinking occurs in the body, not some isolated "internal space," and in the company of others linked together through the repetitions that constitute custom. And the process of interpretation is scarcely immune to doubt. Simply "being there" in the field cannot qualify an ethnographer to produce a transparent account of what he or she has witnessed. Every observation is haunted by a multiplicity of places and times. This holds for ethnographers and the ethnographers of the ethnographers, not to mention the people they study. There is no act of reasoning that is not a leap of faith, both embodied and collective. "Contextualize!" we contemporary anthropologists tell our students. "But take nothing for granted, including context," we always add.

The second term from Hume's repertoire that provides us with a grip on the implicit epistemology we have inherited from *Writing Culture* is sympathy (see Hume 1962 [1738]; Deleuze 1991 [1953]; see also Panagia 2006). Sympathy for Hume is not empathy, pity, or any of the other rosy synonyms for the ability to identify with another that we tend to associate with the word. Rather, it is the embodied outcome of proximity—occasioned by the placement of human bodies and artifacts in space and time—that leads people to share perspectives and passions. Sympathy is the outcome of inference, but with a twist. One witnesses an event—a gesture, a facial expression, an utterance—and one infers a cause, in this case the passion that led to this effect. Proximity makes the passion vivid, and one comes to feel what one imagines the other feels. The ability to share perspectives and passions, for Hume, is not simply the basis of friendship, kinship, and romance. Like inference, sympathy plays a critical role in public life. Without this passion there would be no state, no economy, and no science. Sympathy is an embodied mode of

intersubjectivity; it is the sentiment that provides the grounds of all social pursuits. Sympathy is a source of both power and compassion. It is an instrument of governance. It is also the privileged instrument of ethnography. "Be interested in what people are interested in," we tell our students. We often add a caveat: "Don't presume that simply by seeing things their way you are necessarily doing them any good."

The empirical and the ethical go hand in hand in Hume's work, as they do in *Writing Culture* and the best of contemporary anthropology. Inference and sympathy are key ingredients in every human project. They are ways of getting things done. As kinky empiricists, we would do well to follow Hume in insisting that it is not just anthropologists who engage in "moral reasoning," as singular as our research methods might seem. So do sociologists, psychologists, economists, and political scientists, along with our more distant cousins in the natural and physical sciences. What is distinctive about anthropology among the disciplines—what makes our form of moral reasoning particularly fruitful—is the fact that we refuse to draw a categorical distinction between our practices and those of the people we study. This kind of reflexivity would risk becoming paralyzing, if it were not for an insight that Hume also offers. Even though we are aware of the partiality of our truths, we still must act. For Hume, our seemingly most rigorous ways of thinking proceed "merely from an illusion of the imagination" (Panagia 2006, 90). And yet the practical effects of "this capacity to compose fictions to both ourselves and others," as the Canadian philosopher Davide Panagia points out, are what "saves us from the kind of nihilism Hume's radical skepticism might induce" (2006, 90). As Jacques Derrida (1995 and 1996) insisted, an ethical question is one that cannot be answered according to a prescription or program. Uncertainty and justice go hand in hand in those moments that force us to choose among contending ways of doing the right thing. The empiricism that characterizes anthropology at its best is both skeptical and committed. The discipline's future lives in the kinks.

Looking Forward

If anthropology is going to remain a going concern, we have to learn to inhabit the ethical quandaries built into our kinky empiricism more creatively by building alliances across some of the barriers we have built around cultural anthropology. I have in mind those that divide us from policy work and the more quantitative social sciences. Counting people is not the only way to control them. When it comes to the consequences of our research, the best lives next door to the worst, as this book has made clear. In the course of my research, I came upon an episode that stopped me in my tracks. It was in Lloyd Rhys's *Jungle Pimpernel* (1947), which describes Jan Victor de Bruijn's life and times. As we have seen, Rhys presents de Bruijn as an urbane, sophisticated man, playing up the fact he had a doctorate in Javanese archaeology, which made his devotion to the "Stone Age" Papuans all the more remarkable. As Rhys explains it, it was this devotion to his primitive companions, and the Dutch empire he served, that led de Bruijn to refuse to evacuate at the outset of World War II when western New Guinea fell to the Japanese. Rhys describes the wealth of ethnographic knowledge gathered by de Bruijn during his adventures running from the Japanese. De Bruijn gained an intimate acquaintance with the Papuans' distinct form of justice when a man accused of sleeping with another man's wife took shelter in the house where de Bruijn was staying. The man begged de Bruijn to save him, and de Bruijn almost succeeded, moved as he was by the dread that swept over the unfortunate man. But when the crowd set fire to the building, forcing the culprit to come out, de Bruijn picked up his camera. Rhys recounts what happened next. "When the adulterer had been shot and captured and de Bruijn could do nothing to intervene, he took the opportunity of taking an extraordinary set of photographs of the scene. Like many of his pictures they are unique. No other white man is known to have witnessed such an event, and no other photographs are known to exist" (Rhys 1947, 210).

For de Bruijn, as for other Dutch officials in New Guinea, sympathy was a means of controlling the Papuans. And yet it created obligations—obligations born of the unsettling proximity that de Bruijn had to experience to get state building done. The fact that sympathy was an instrumental, as well as an unavoidable, element of governance in New Guinea may have made it easier for de Bruijn to put sympathy back in his toolbox when its demands proved impossible to fulfill. This is not to say that the obligations born of de Bruijn's proximity to the Papuans were not real. The abruptness with which de Bruijn turned to photography is evidence of the violence it took to turn away when he was faced with the prospect of sympathizing with the dead. However much we might want to distance ourselves from colonial figures like de Bruijn, the scenario Rhys describes should make anthropologists uncomfortable. This is not simply because there is no way fully to satisfy our obligation to others. It is also because an ethnographer and his or her subjects come from and return to different places. He or she and they come from and return to different sets of circumstances that open different opportunities, offer different constraints, and pose different demands.

When Jeff Schonberg picked up his camera in the research that led to *Righteous Dopefiend* (Bourgois and Schonberg 2009), his and Philippe Bourgois's astonishing study of homeless heroin users in San Francisco, it was not in an effort to turn his back on obligations. Like de Bruijn, Schonberg documented suffering: the dusty, trash-strewn roadside where a man crouches to inject himself, the exposed flesh left after the removal of an abscess from another man's neck; the grief on the face of another man near the coffin of a deceased friend. But Schonberg's aim was not to take a distanced view on the distress he witnessed; it was to help create a book that acts as an artifact, in Hume's sense, enlivening the passions—and expanding the imaginations—of anyone who opens its pages. The two authors' prose fulfills much the same function. The book consists of a refreshingly unapologetic combination of divergent kinds of evidence—from statistical data drawn from the public health and policy studies litera-

tures to excerpts from field notes intimately detailing particular people's lives, loves, and torments.

What is remarkable about the book is its ability to track between the empirical and the ethical. The book offers a fascinating analysis of the different ways black and white heroin addicts inhabit their predicament: from their methods of injection, to their ways of getting by, to the divergent ways they stand, talk, move and react in a world that is ethnically divided. At the same time, Bourgois and Schonberg get close enough to the complicated lives of individuals to show how ethnic boundaries are crossed. Large-scale circumstances are everywhere revealed in this ethnography as shaping the narrow world that Bourgois and Schonberg describe. These circumstances range from the role of race in fragmenting the labor force that existed before economic change turned this industrialized neighborhood of the city into a wasteland, to the tendency of African American extended families to retain ties to addicted relatives, to the streetwise styles of comportment available to black addicts but not to whites, who appear to the world as pitiful, not fearsome and strong. And yet Bourgois and Schonberg's role in the narrow world created by these circumstances is anything but that of a tourist. Bourgois and Schonberg hung out with the heroin addicts. They went with them on "licks"—expeditions to steal enough resalable goods to provide for another fix. They slept in their leaky tents on cold, rainy winter nights. They lent money to the addicts; they gave them rides; they gave them photographs; they documented the stories and images the addicts wanted them to record.

Bourgois and Schonberg's book stands as a tribute to particular people: Tina, Carter, Frank, Max, Petey, Scotty. And yet it opens and closes as a policy study: a book that yields specific recommendations on how Americans might deal with the problem of heroin addiction more effectively. The research Bourgois and Schonberg undertook was funded to do precisely this: to document the public health implications of different methods of injection. As much as Bourgois and Schonberg registered the effects of specifically US modes of sovereignty and governmen-

tality in the lives of those they studied, this lens does not obscure their gaze. The book ends with a bittersweet account of how the authors tried to help the individuals who populate the book escape drug addiction when their twelve years of fieldwork ended. But it also ends with a call to action to transform the circumstances that made the lives described in the book the ones the addicts had to lead. The efficacy of this appeal turns on a methodological eclecticism in which fieldwork is not the only way to illuminate a social world. It is impossible not to identify with the people Bourgois and Schonberg so generously and unflinchingly describe in their joy as well as their pain. But the book's power depends on the authors' ability to step back: to pick up not just a camera but also statistics. There is no question: the bold contentiousness called for in *Writing Culture* is absent from Bourgois and Schonberg's study. *Righteous Dopefiend*'s kinky empiricism is marked by what one might hope is a different kind of bravery: the courage to build alliances with anthropology's disciplinary rivals in the social sciences but to do so on our own terms.

In thinking through what these terms should be, I can't help but miss the voice of Rolph Trouillot. It's been twenty years since Trouillot told us that the time was ripe for anthropologists to contest what he called the "savage slot"—the field of inquiry that defined anthropology's place among the disciplines well before anthropology even existed.[6] Trouillot had a far less sanguine view of the project undertaken in *Writing Culture* than I have presented here. Anthropological calls for reflexivity were "timid, spontaneous—and in this sense genuinely American—responses to major changes in relations between anthropology and the wider world, provincial expressions of wider concerns, allusions to opportunities yet to be seized" now that the "savages" were gone (Trouillot 1991, 19). Today's anthropologists have in many ways seized these opportunities and undertaken the "fundamental redirection" Trouillot demanded. There has been no shortage of anthropologists seeking "new points of reentry by questioning the symbolic world upon which 'nativeness' is presumed" (ibid., 40). This is no shortage of anthropologists "claiming new

grounds" (ibid., 36).[7] But even as we engage in research that is creating new contact zones among the social sciences, we still have yet to develop compelling ways of laying out what anthropologists can—and can't—do better than economists, psychologists, or political scientists. To repeat Trouillot's exhortation, the time is still ripe for "an epistemology and semiology of all anthropology has done and can do."

Kinky empiricism: those who embrace it are attuned to the real-world effects of their own practices and the texts that they put into the world. They are aware of the analytic and ethical twists and turns born of a research method that forces them to get close enough to imagine how it might feel to walk in another's shoes. They are not afraid of dangerous liaisons. If I began this book with a confession, I am ending it with a call to arms. It is time for anthropologists to think more courageously about the purposes of our scholarship, the sentiments we indulge, and the obligations bound up in our practices. By paying heed to the powers, pleasures, and perils of our discipline, we can learn to take responsibility for the worlds we build up, in the company of others, out of the impressions left by objects, deeds, and words.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. Biaks aspired to become *amber*, a term that means "foreigner" and was used during my fieldwork to refer to a range of high-status figures: Europeans or Americans, civil servants, and accomplished locals. See Rutherford 2003. I once heard a joke that had one highlander asking another: "What will happen when Biaks actually do become foreigners?" "We'll become Biaks."

2. See http://www.climbstoneage.com, accessed February 19, 2013.

3. Trouillot is also talking about the way national historiography elides conflict, as is the case with the silencing of reports on the war within the war won by Haiti's King Henry I against a former slave turned colonial who sought to radicalize the struggle. See Trouillot 1995, 37–44.

4. Thomsen, an amateur antiquarian, is credited with inventing stratigraphy, a dating method central to modern archaeological research. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three-age_system, accessed February 19, 2013.

5. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three-age_system, accessed February 19, 2013.

6. The "modern savages" Lubbock discusses include Hottentots, Veddahs, Andaman Islanders, Australians, Tasmanians, Maories, Tahitians, Tongans, Esquimaux, North American Indians, Paraguay Indians, Patagonians, and Fuegians. See Lubbock 1865, xiv.

7. For a portrait of these early expeditions, see Ballard, Vink, and Ploeg 2002.

8. For a close analysis of contemporary travel writing infused by much the same spirit, see Stasch 2011.

9. Both van Eechoud and de Bruijn played a key role in lobbying Dutch policy makers for western New Guinea's retention after 1949. See Rutherford 2009.

10. See McPherson 2001 for a discussion of state building in Australian New Guinea.

11. Writing of imperial Japan and China, Duara (2003, 9–40) notes that nationalism emerged in opposition to imperialism during the period discussed in this book, but so did the presumption that colonial authority should extend right to the edge of the "geobody" represented on modern maps. See also Winichakul 1994.

12. In this comment de Bruijn made reference to a local practice. Several of de Bruijn's Papuan guides brought home wives from Beura, one from the regions they visited with the official. See de Bruijn 1941, 25.

13. Jenny Munro's account of the consequences of this conceit among Dani is the most visceral. The injustice, the poor-quality schooling, the demeaning encounters with the bureaucracy: all are forms of violence that set indigenous men and women up to fail. See Munro 2013.

14. Lubbock does the same at the end of his book, albeit with the emphasis squarely on vices: "There are, indeed, many who doubt whether happiness is increased by civilization, and who talk of the free and noble savage. But the true savage is neither free nor noble; he is a slave to his own wants, his own passions; imperfectly protected from the weather, he suffers the cold by night and the heat of the sun by day; ignorant of agriculture, living by the chase and improvident in success, hunger always stares him in the face and often drives him to the dreadful alternative of cannibalism or death." Lubbock 1865, 484.

15. See "Angry Papuan Leaders Demand Jared Diamond Apologizes," *Survival for Tribal Peoples*, News and Media, February 4, 2013, at http://www.survivalinternational.org/news/8958, accessed February 19, 2013. The accompanying article sums up the statement: "The West Papuan leaders attack Diamond's central arguments that 'most small-scale societies . . . become trapped in cycles of violence and warfare' and that 'New Guineans appreciated the benefits of the state-guaranteed peace that they had been unable to achieve for themselves without state government.'" The other leader quoted, Markus Haluk, a member of the

Papuan Customary Council, claimed, "The total of Dani victims from the Indonesian atrocities over the fifty-year period is far greater than those from tribal wars of the Dani people over hundreds of thousands of years."

16. "Rumble in the Jungle: Fighting for Freedom in West Papua," http://www.eco-action.org/opm/opmint.html, accessed February 14, 2013. See also Hastings 1982.

CHAPTER ONE

1. The dissertation was a bit of an accident. De Bruijn had to wait in Leiden for a posting, and he completed a thesis just to pass the time: "The Significance of the Painter H. N. SIEBURGH for the Hindu-Javanese Archaeology" ("H. N. Sieburgh en zijn beteekenis voor de Hindoe-Javaansche Oudheidkunde"), which focused on an eccentric early nineteenth-century amateur and his drawings of ancient Javanese temples.

2. For an account of the intensive system of agriculture practiced around the lakes as described by one of de Bruijn's associates, the Dutch botanist Dr. P. J. Eyma, see Ploeg 2000. Like other Western visitors, Eyma was impressed by the highlanders' settled way of life, especially when compared with the "nomadic" lowlanders, "notorious for their head-hunting and cannibalism." "My impression is that this society does not rank below that of other inland tribes in the [Indonesian] archipelago; in some respects it even strikes me as more orderly, more tranquil, and more finely honed." Ibid., 409. Ploeg speculates that the tranquillity that reigned when Eyma visited the Wissel Lakes might have been an artifact of the arrival of Europeans. "They had suspended hostilities to benefit more from the presence of the newly arrived members of the colonial establishment: the *controleur* and other public servants, the missionaries and the members of the KNAG Expedition. Their presence meant the influx of a considerable number of cowrie shells." Ibid., 411.

3. This region lay north of the homeland of the Oehoendoeni (now known as Amungme) in a territory inhabited by members of the Dani tribe, to use the name first given them by their Moni neighbors. Divided into several regional subgroups, the Dani make up one of the largest ethnolinguistic groups in West Papua. The Dani first appeared in the colonial record as the "Pesegem" and "Horip" tribes, encountered living on the fringe of Dani territory during an expedition led by Hendrikus

Lorentz in 1909. In 1920, in the Zwart (now the Toli) Valley, during the Central New Guinea Expedition, in which H. J .T. Bijlmer made his New Guinea debut, the Western Dani, a much larger group, became known. In 1938 an American philanthropist and zoologist, Richard Archbold, caught sight of the Grand Valley Dani in their homeland on the Baliem River, first by airplane, then on foot. Interestingly, de Bruijn says less about Archbold's "discovery" than about the need to verify a story then circulating in Enarotali about the so-called white Manoekoe: an outlying Dani group living in the mountains between Enarotali and the Baliem who supposedly had white skin and tails. See Rhys 1947, 91.

4. According to P. J. Eyma, who accompanied de Bruijn, the party received more than thirty large pigs. See Ploeg 2000, 408.

5. Tillemans was an indomitable explorer, who was the first to befriend Weakebo and another important Kapauku leader, Auki, whom we'll meet below. See Rhys 1947, 55.

6. Rhys (1947, 15) vaguely references this community when he sets de Bruijn's birth with a caul over his head in the context of East Indies belief even as he stresses his loyalty to the Dutch flag.

7. They were living out the legacy of Sir William MacGregor, the first lieutenant governor, who served from 1888 to 1895 and was known for applying a firm hand. His more famous and longer-serving successor, Sir Hubert Murray, who served from 1908 to 1940, called for tolerance.

8. And Soalekigi was discriminating when it came to choosing his companions. When Charles C. F. M. Le Roux asked de Bruijn whether he could "borrow" Soalekigi for his own expedition, the Moni leader refused, supposedly because he didn't like the man's face. See Rhys 1947, 67.

9. Giay 1999 offers an explanation of Weakebo's enthusiasm for the newcomers. His clan, the Motes, were in a long-standing dispute with the original landowners of Jaba, the Pakages, and Weakebo saw befriending the Dutch as a way of gaining an advantage, as well as promoting his own fortunes. In the 1950s Weakebo was one of the few Me leaders to welcome Dutch officials and missionaries back; in return, the government came to his aid in a "war" with the Pakages—whom the Dutch had labeled a "rebellious" clan—and voiced strong opposition against Zacheus Pakage, leader of a millennial uprising that shook the community of new Christians. This community included Weakebo and his relatives, who became leaders in both the Catholic and the Protestant churches, including his daughters, whom Weakebo groomed to

marry local evangelists. Giay notes, "[Weakebo's] decision to cooperate with the *ogai* [foreigners] and to follow Christianity was thus not unlike embarking on a journey, not with any clear destination in mind, but as a means of exploring different possibilities."

10. See also Stasch 2016 on references to Singapore and other foreign cities as the focus of a complex mixture of desire and revulsion among the Korowai, a West Papuan group.

11. Indonesian nationalists declared independence on August 17, 1945.

12. "The people still see the police as a foreign element," Meijer Ranneft thought. But arguably, given their tendency to intervene to their own advantage in local affairs, they were in some sense not foreign enough. See Meijer Ranneft 1952, 46.

13. "I won't forbid the Moni to work with you," Soalekigi went on. "But I myself no longer will. I'm too old for it." See Boelen 1955, 19.

CHAPTER TWO

1. My account of Hume's formulations draws on Mitchell 2007; Pinch 1996; and Deleuze 1991 [1953] and 1994.

2. Other histories of state building in New Guinea, a region long marginalized in colonial studies, could potentially do the same. See Ogan 2001. On the role of "imaginary identification" in the conquest and colonization of the New World, see Todorov 1984; Jones 1998; Deloria 1998; and Mallios 2006. This work foregrounds what Foster calls the "recreation of thoughts," not the recreation of embodied passions.

3. This was the Netherlands New Guinea Petroleum and Mining Corporation, which was owned by the Batavia Petroleum Corporation, Standard Vacuum Oil, and Far Pacific Investments. See Vlasblom 2004, 92.

4. I have in mind here something like Gustave Guillaume's concept of "operational time." See Agamben 2005, 65–67.

5. For Deleuze, Hume's writings on habit reveal the difference inherent in repetition, something embedded in what he calls the "synthesis of time." In this synthesis, the past and the future represent dimensions of the present, one consisting of the "particulars it envelops," the other of the "general which it develops in the field of its expectation." See Deleuze 1994, 71.

6. Deleuze (1994, 74) proposes that the organic is that which "contracts habits," two terms that he defines with reference to one another. "When we say that habit is a contraction we are speaking not of an in-

stantaneous action which combines with another to form an element of repetition, but rather of the fusion of that repetition in the contemplating mind. A soul must be attributed to the heart, to the muscles, nerves and cells, but a contemplative soul whose entire function is to contract a habit. This is no mystical or barbarous hypothesis. On the contrary, habit here manifests its full generality: it concerns not only the sensory–motor habits that we have (psychologically), but also, before these, the primary habits that we are; the thousands of passive syntheses of which we are organically composed." Deleuze's discussion of the Freudian concept of the pleasure principle clarifies this reasoning. "Pleasure is a principle in so far as it is the emotion of a fulfilling contemplation which contracts in itself cases of relaxation *and* contraction."

7. According to Hume, it is by inferring and re-creating another's ideas and impressions that one is able to interpret what others—including even animal others—do. Our resemblance to others makes this possible. An animal's "structure of veins and muscles, the fibers and situation of the heart, of the lungs, of the stomach. . . . are the same or nearly the same" as ours. See Hume 1962 [1738], 127–28, 232.

8. On colonial cultures of expertise, see Mitchell 2002; see also Jasanoff 2005. On the sometimes tense relations between colonial officials and European missionaries, traders, and ethnographers, all of whom made it their business to "know" the natives, see Malinowski 1989; Kipp 1990; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991; Schrauwers 2000; Lepowsky 2001; Rutherford 2003. I'd like to thank Andrew Mathews for suggesting this line of analysis.

9. See Schneider 1980.

10. Compare McPherson 2001, 91.

11. Compare Golub 2006.

12. The Me leader who guided the expedition, Weakebo Mote, seemed to want to keep van Eechoud out of Itodah and Koegapa, whose Moni inhabitants were already far too cozy with the newcomers, having also assisted van Eechoud's colleague Cator in a preliminary expedition to the region the year before. On Weakebo's other motivations, see Giay 1999.

13. The scientists whom Ravenswaaij Classen was guarding did their work behind a fence designed to keep out curious Papuans. See de Bruijn 1939c, 9–10.

14. In the course of explaining widow killing as something done by a dead man's closest friends because they can't bear to see the woman

with another man, Soalekigi announced that no one would look askance if de Bruijn took advantage of this privilege on the older man's death. See de Bruijn 1939c, 12.

15. "Wherever you look in the story of native races and in the history of the administration of coloured peoples, you may never find its like. On the one hand is the polished student, imbued with intellect, knowledge, poetic feeling, a lover of the arts, in love with life; on the other the neolithic Papuan, a member of one of the most primitive tribes on the face of the earth, who knew no art other than that of cutting and trading a stone axe. From the very extremes of civilization and culture these two men found a common level in the naturalness and simplicity, the downright honesty of each other, which was the substance of their greatness." See Rhys 1947, 90.

16. For an account of the practical power of mimicry in a settler colonial context, see Deloria's 1998 study of all the ways in which "playing Indian" enabled non–Indian Americans to construct a legitimate and authentic sense of self while providing an idiom of resistance against the British.

17. Compare Duara 2003; Rutherford 2012b.

18. Rosaldo (1986) describes the "imperial nostalgia" shared by anthropologists, missionaries, and colonial officials. Anthropologists, like their imperial counterparts, disavow their complicity with dominant regimes of power by mourning that which their work has helped to destroyed. See also Asad 1975.

19. Marcus (1998:116) describes this response. "The anthropology of the old sort either is over, is paralyzed by moralizing insight, or continues to be practiced as a tragic occupation, done in the full awareness of the pitfalls of its powerful rhetorics of self-justification." See also Pemberton 1993.

20. Studies of anthropology and empire have often focused on the colonial origins of ethnological or analytic categories—for instance, "Java," in Pemberton's exceptional study (1993). This focus offers an easy out for anthropologists concerned about the discipline's prospects for redemption. Peter Pels and Oscar Salemink (2000), for instance, suggest that time will cleanse our sins. Anthropologists no longer need worry about the tainted colonial origins of the notion of cultural essences, now that globalization has fragmented all identities.

21. See Marcus 1998; Harding 2000; and Masco 2006.

22. See Latour 2005 for a recuperation of the empirical; but see

Fischer 2007, 560 for a critique of Latour's failure to attend to the "affective dimensions of science." On affect and the empirical, see Massumi 2002.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Van Waardenburg was no fan of van Eechoud. He had visited New Guinea once, and the trip had prompted him to write a critical report on the resident's "high-handedness" and "lack of knowledge of administrative procedures." See Drooglever 2005, 241.

2. As the twentieth-century critic Lewis Mumford once put it, the "organic satisfaction" associated with rhythmic movement "demands repetition" and brings "a reward in greater skill." Mumford 1967, 60.

3. For the entire poem, see http://www.dowse.com/poetry/Rudyard-poem.html.

4. Other expeditions had explored this region, which was first reached by one of the military expeditions that charted the north coast in the period roughly between 1909 and 1915. The leaders of this expedition were J. W. Langeler and L. A. C. M. Doorman. See Langeler and Doorman 1918. The Waropen coolies on van Eechoud's expedition equated civilization with tax-paying—they were civilized, the tribes in the interior were not. See van Eechoud 1953, 20.

5. As van Eechoud explains, the colonial government had disbanded this native security corps elsewhere in the Indies. But former members remained active in New Guinea and other far-flung places where officials needed cover for expeditions.

6. Wuwung and van Eechoud ended up deciding that they would cross the mountains quickly with the full contingent, then send half of the coolies back. In earlier expeditions, Dayaks from Kalimantan and convicts from Java acted as bearers; it was rough going. Paul Wirz, an anthropologist who participated in one of these trips into the interior, reported that many of these recruits from outside New Guinea ended up committing suicide. See Ploeg 1995, 230.

7. "During the distribution they were like chickens pecking especially for these loads, but these had other fans, too, and everywhere loud disputes broke out." Van Eechoud 1953, 20.

8. Van Eechoud goes on to explain the origins of his men. "After the official dissolving of the Armed Police in the Indies one had members of the old corps who remained in New Guinea, as much as possible

serve out their time. They were left there practically to their fate; they had no proper leadership, they were not properly cared for, many detachments lived in 1936 in housing that was set up as temporary housing in 1926 and that didn't look much better than Papuan homes. There were decrepit fellows who, after thirty years' service in the jungle, didn't have much more to accomplish." Ibid.,30.

9. Van Eechoud had watched new police agents from Java huddling, hungry and wet, in their shelters. "The newcomers were still hopelessly trying to get a fire to catch while the old-timers were eating their supper." Ibid., 30.

10. It wasn't simply a matter of getting stung. Swarmed, van Eechoud swatted at his face without dropping his machete, leaving a gash on his neck. See ibid., 17.

11. Van Eechoud's description of the accumulation of knowledge recalls Hume's account of how circumstances shape the imagination and foster expectations. See chapter 2. Van Eechoud gives several examples of how seemingly trivial events sparked reactions that helped him gain expertise. See van Eechoud 1953, 37.

12. As a result, van Eechoud was unable to take any pictures during this expedition. Somewhat incongruously, the chapter is illustrated with shots from the Wisselmeren, where van Eechoud went on his next expedition.

13. Needless to say, van Eechoud's appropriation of the capacities of the compass obscured the broader network of actors involved in charting a route, from the platforms that enabled van Eechoud to take readings to the clouds that made landmarks impossible to see.

14. Compasses provide an especially clear example of what feminist science studies scholar Karen Barad (2010, 178) has helpfully described as the "intra-active" nature of agency: agency is an "enactment" rather than something the compass itself (or its owner) could possess.

15. This is fortunate, because van Eechoud's first assignment took him through lands where there were few wild Papuans to meet.

16. Van Eechoud uses the English term and apparently developed this strategy based on what he had learned about "primitives" elsewhere. Van Eechoud anticipates this appetite for Western goods in his account of an earlier episode, when he tells how the Papuan bachelors residing near Wuwung's post at Demba decorated themselves. Many wore elaborate getups of feathers and body paint. But a few wore nothing but

a "filthy hat," assuming that this modern finery would trump the most spectacular indigenous garb.

17. In his discussion of the Dayak bearers who made possible the 1926 Stirling Expedition, Jaap Timmer (2006, 50) quotes Bill Gammage, who points out that "explorers do not explore; they are led."

18. Otherwise sophisticated histories of the Netherlands Indies have taken this superiority for granted rather than considering Western technology as but one element among the many human and nonhuman agents on which the assertion of Dutch rule came to depend. See J. Taylor 2004. Even Edwin Hutchins seems to retain the notion that there are "differences in level of technology" in his explanation of the origins of the notion that "individuals in primitive cultures have primitive minds."

> If one believes that technology is the consequence of cognitive capabilities, and if one further believes that the only place to look for the sources of cognitive capabilities is inside individual minds, then observed differences in level of technology between a "technologically advanced" and a "technologically primitive" culture will inevitably be seen as evidence of advanced and primitive minds.

See Hutchins 1996, 355.

19. With no predetermined function, this energy fuels dreams, then collective pursuits consisting of coordinated repetitions: starting with rituals and symbols and ending with machines. Taking this harnessing of affect to another level, the invention of the "megamachine" that built monuments and engaged in mass warfare turned on a dream of sorts—the myth of a sovereignty sanctioned by the gods. Much as Hume upends the opposition between reason and passion when he finds belief and habit at the heart of inference, Mumford upends the opposition between "irrational" and "superrational" pursuits.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. This is not to say rifle demonstrations always worked to instill respect for Australian authority. Gammage quotes Patrol Officer Jim Taylor writing of his earliest patrols in the eastern New Guinea highlands, where, in the company of the Leahy brothers, who first discovered gold in the region, he explored the Baiyer and Jimi Valleys and climbed Mt. Hagen in 1932. On the way home the men faced frequent attacks and

found the "attitude of the natives . . . entirely different from that on our first trip through."

> Then they imagined us gods or spirits but on reflection they realized their mistake apparently and so a revulsion of feeling took place. . . . Our peaceful behaviour they regarded as being due to us not being warriors—and to an absence of weapons. Rifles they imagined were sticks and though they saw them shoot through trees and kill pigs they still could not connect them with their concept of war. Day after day we encountered large numbers of hostile or contemptuous people who shouted insults at us and howled with derisive laughter when told to desist. They appeared to think that they had us in their power. . . . One fellow actually brought rope to tie up his share of the loot.

See Gammage 1998, 13.

2. What's more, the person "I" become in articulating this phrase takes on an unassailable-seeming reality as the agent of this speech act. The pronoun itself already refers to the event of its utterance: "I" is defined as the individual uttering "I." See Benveniste 1971.

3. Some of the Papuans involved might well have had little trouble understanding what Austin was talking about when he described how performatives work. During the early 1950s Leopold Pospisil (1978 [1963]) interviewed a number of philosophically inclined Kapauku in the "uncontacted" Kamu Valley. They explained that persons are composed of two parts: bodies and souls. "To live" was *ami-tou*, "to sleep, referring to the separate existence of the soul, and to stay in place, referring to the material existence of the body." "My body stays in place, my soul dreams, and I live," one man explained (Pospisil 1978 [1963], 87). For the Kapauku, Pospisil elaborated, "'I' means consciousness; it means the thinking process is the cooperative effort of the body and soul" (ibid.). This model of the person, which valorized the unified action of an uttered word or enacted gesture and a body staged in space, may well account for the appeal of technology demonstrations and the eagerness of Kapauku to repeat them.

4. Bijlmer undertook this trip at the behest of the Maatschappij ter Bevordering van het Natuurkundig Onderzoek der Nederlands Kolonien (Corporation for the Advance of Natural Scientific Research in the Dutch Colonies) and with the support of then governor general

B. C. de Jonge and his boss, the minister of colonies and New Guinea enthusiast Dr. H. Colijn (see Bijlmer n.d.). Twenty companions came along, including a local government official, Civiel Gezaghebber S. van der Groot, and the Catholic priest Father Tillemans, whom Bijlmer had met in 1931, when he served as medical officer on a British expedition to the top of Mt. Carstens (ibid.; see also Ballard, Vink, and Ploeg 2002). (The British expedition had passed through the Tapiro pygmies' homeland, and Bijlmer and Tillemans met individuals who still remembered them—and, no doubt, their loot, which took the form of metal knives, axes, shells, mirrors, and beads [Bijlmer n.d.: 49].)

5. This was against the better judgment of I. J. R. Meijer Ranneft, who at the time was the head of government in the Wisselmeren.

6. Zacheus threatened to quit if the missionaries refused. By a gentlemen's agreement brokered by de Bruijn, the Protestant Christian and Missionary Alliance (CAMA), and the Roman Catholics split the region. Tigi was official a Catholic mission field; the missionaries wanted Zacheus to go to Wandai, three days' walk to the east.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Pospisil defined law, for example, as "the principles abstracted from authoritative judicial decisions which are intended for universal application, define the relation between the two parties, and are accompanied by effective sanctions." See French 1993, 4. He was such a stickler for precise heuristics that he "refused to engage in conversation when the parties have not agreed about what they are discussing." See French 1993, 2.

2. Goodale criticizes Pospisil for failing to include native voices in his writings (Goodale 1998). This critique is not accurate, as Pospisil (2001) makes clear.

3. The components of this concept included authority, intention of universal application, *obligation*, and sanction. See Goodale 2002, 126.

4. Pospisil simply walked up to the governor's palace, past the sentry, and asked to see van Baal, who came out in his dressing gown to greet the intruder. Pospisil remembered the conversation well. "I'm surprised the sentry didn't shoot you," van Baal told him. "This is how you greet your visitors?" Pospisil replied. Van Baal told Pospisil to return the next day.

5. Knowing something about the context enables one to see something more in this story: the intersection between the colonial and the

anthropological in the reproduction of the savage slot. Van Baal was remarkable in the prominence he achieved within anthropology at the same time he served as a high-ranking official. De Bruijn switched hats less frequently, although he also produced academic articles of some interest in the field. Another Dutch anthropologist who gathered his data while employed by the Dutch colonial regime was Jan Pouwer, who wrote his thesis under J. P. B. de Josselin de Jong on the basis of data he gathered during fieldwork among the Kamoro in Mimika between 1951 and 1954. Pouwer's official title was "government anthropologist"; he worked as a research officer at the Bureau of Native Affairs, the division headed up by de Bruijn. Pouwer became a full-time academic after the territory's transfer to Indonesia. See Pouwer 1961.

6. The Dutch had managed to keep the territory out of the agreement that resulted in the rest of the Indies being transferred to Indonesia by pointing out, to paraphrase van Baal, that the Papuans and the Indonesians had nothing in common and that the Indonesians stationed in the territory were viewed more as foreigners than as compatriots. See van Baal 1989, 166.

7. Sjoerd Jaarsma and Marta Rohatynskyj (2000, 61) report that he was "actually dropped by parachute." This seems unlikely.

8. What Ted Cohen (2008) calls the "talent for metaphor" is what allowed Pospisil to generalize across widely divergent contexts.

9. "All of them. And I said, you quit learning the language when you understand when a native speaks not to you, but to another native. . . . You don't have to speak without mistakes. But you have to understand what's going on." For much the same reason, Pospisil refused to allow his students to bring their spouses into the field. Having someone to talk to in English would have made them less attentive to local conversations.

10. Pospisil also documents every Botukebo resident's relationship to the owner of the house where they live, exports of game and artifacts from Botukebo, how relatives and strangers figure in the totality of all credits and debts in Botukebo, the relationship between sweet potato production and consumption in Botubeko households, and the total economic status of the people of Botukebo. The appendices also include a detailed genealogical chart.

11. Given their skills, Pospisil thought that the Kapauku were poised to become leaders should the Papuans gain their own nation-state.

12. Pospisil, who had left Czechoslovakia at the height of the Cold

War, clearly had no patience for the notion that communism lay at the origins of human development—or, really, of anything good.

13. A Kapauku father refused to try to persuade his child to get vaccinated; in this social world, when a six-year-old refused to do something, that was that. See Pospisil 1972, 405, 403. The quest for "social recognition and prestige" among the Kapauku led them to extreme measures, including stealing. Kapauku who recovered lost items would trick their owners into paying them to give them back. See Pospisil 1972, 401.

14. He used the term in the interview. On his way to Biak with a Kapauku leader, Pospisil got a bright idea. He introduced his Kapauku friend to the pilot, who let him steer the plane. "And the chief pulled up, and we went up. Up, left, and right. It was a riot! Oh he enjoyed that! So there was a missionary coming up to us. What's happening? Are we in trouble? I said, no, no trouble, the chief is flying the plane." "Oh it was quite an experience, that airplane," Pospisil went on. "Stone Age man, who might have seen white men, because he was traveling probably before I came, but certainly I was one of the first, and so he was from there and flying in the flying boat, the Catalina, and the interesting thing about him was that he was not afraid at all."

15. Pospisil's monographs can serve as a resource in excavating something imaginable as the perspective of the Papuan individuals who threw in their lot with Dutch officials like van Eechoud and de Bruijn. Soalekigi was arguably following the same imperative that Pospisil's houseboys and other young men did when they forged relationships with older men who could help them get ahead.

16. The shell currency they brought was subtly different from that already in circulation in the highlands and became the basis for new distinctions of value among the Kapauku. Still, Dutch spending caused inflation and a steep decline in the value of shell currency; despite Dutch efforts to preserve the local economy, Kapauku were soon using metal currency (and metal objects like knives and axes) in situations in which they previously used shells.

17. "The following analysis of change of law and its effects upon a tribal society as a whole is based on material gathered among the inhabitants of the Kamu Valley of the mountainous interior of the western part of New Guinea, now known as Irian Jaya. The Mimika people of the southern coast of this island call these mountain Papuans 'Kapauku,' their Moni Papuan neighbors refer to them as 'Ekagi.' The people call themselves 'Me'—The People. Originally I studied Kamu

Kapauku in the years 1954–55, before they had been pacified; many of them saw in me their first white man. Since that time I have followed my research with periodic restudies of the people, as political and financial circumstances allowed (1959, 1962, 1975, 1979). This long-term study has yielded a dynamic picture of a Stone Age society, its rather abrupt transition to civilization, and the concomitant changes in its legal structure." See Pospisil 1981, 93 (his article is a published version of a talk Pospisil delivered in Switzerland in 1979).

18. Pospisil agreed to see me only after Octo reassured him that I was fluent in Biak, the language spoken in my first West Papua field site. (Octo was exaggerating.) Pospisil had recently refused to meet with another anthropologist, who had actually worked with a Me group, after hearing that he had used Indonesian to do his research. The fact that I had read Pospisil's books certainly helped. Throughout the interview Pospisil repeatedly asked me whether he'd written about the story he was about to tell. He also repeatedly broke into Kapauku, often at moments when an English word evaded him. Octo translated for me, sometimes into English and sometimes into Indonesian. Pospisil's Kapauku companions had done the same for him, he told me, when he visited government offices during his last visit to West Papua, which by that time was under Indonesian rule.

19. An equally telling example came earlier, when Pospisil explained how the experience of being tortured by the Nazis prepared him for fieldwork. The SS and Gestapu were trying to get Pospisil to tell them where his father was; he didn't know, and they didn't stop. It seemed as though he was going to die. "Ever since, everything is better!" Pospisil quipped. Nothing fazed him, he told me—like the Kapauku, he could withstand pain—and like the Kapauku who shot at the airplane he was not afraid, not to live in an "unpacified" valley, not to face up to "that communist," Sukarno, not to have a tooth filled without Novocain or surgery with a stone knife. Here again, a singular event creates embodied dispositions that have an impact in the world—in this case in ways that were the precondition for Pospisil's writing the books he wrote and talking to me on that day.

20. I was carrying a letter from Benny Giay, which one of my companions advised me to save until we arrived at the office. He wasn't afraid of the Javanese intelligence agents; rather, he was frightened of raising the expectations of the local population. Giay is a major figure in the peaceful movement for self-determination; quasi-messianic

expectations swirled around him. If they saw me passing a letter from Benny to the activists, they would assume this was a sign that Papua soon would be free.

21. They called themselves Me, which means "The People," not Kapauku, nor Ekari, another word used by outsiders for their group. Whether people were Protestant or Catholic proved critical in determining how people experienced being Me; Protestants had eliminated customary practices, whereas Catholics sponsored *juwo* or pig feasts, replete with songs and dances from earlier times.

22. The full quote is instructive. It is the first bit of concrete advice that comes after Trouillot appeals for a vision alert to the fact that "there is no Other, but multitudes of others who are all others for different reasons, in spite of totalizing narratives, including that of capital."

> First, anthropology needs to evaluate its gains and losses in light of these issues, with a fair tally of the knowledge anthropologists have produced in the past, sometimes in spite of themselves and almost always in spite of the savage slot. We owe it to ourselves to ask what remains of anthropology and of specific monographs when we remove this slot—not to revitalize disciplinary tradition through cosmetic surgery, but to build both an epistemology and a semiology of what anthropologists have done and can do. We cannot simply assume that modernism has exhausted all its potential projects. Nor can we assume that "realist ethnography" has produced nothing but empty figures of speech and shallow claims to authority.

See Trouillot 1991, 39.

CHAPTER SIX

1. James Siegel developed themes from this course in his brilliant study of Indonesian nationalism, *Fetish, Recognition, Revolution* (1997).

2. Clifford and others of the time drew on Bakhtin 1981 for their notion of dialogue. Read by way of Jakobson, Peirce, Goffman, Derrida, and others, Bahktin's ideas about dialogue and voicing also run through much of the work cited above.

3. See Siegel 1997 on this predicament.

4. See, for example, Sangren 1988. Clifford 1986a also points to the diversity of the chapters and eschews any effort to reduce them to a single project.

5. In his introduction to *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, Richard H. Popkin reports that Hume told Adam Smith that "the only reason he wanted to stay alive was to 'see the elimination of this strange superstition, Christianity, that pervaded the world.' Then, in his usual skeptical manner, Hume added that even if he could carry on his efforts in this direction, he doubted that Christianity would ever be eliminated." See Hume 1980.

6. Trouillot traced this slot to a thématique born during the Renaissance, when the savage became an element in the trilogy, along with order and utopia, that oriented the political and conceptual moves through what we now take as the West came into being (1991, 18). Whether or not representations of the newly discovered "other" had any empirical reality is beside the point, Trouillot tells us: "The savage is only evidence in a debate, the importance of which surpasses not only his understanding but also his very existence" (ibid.,33).

7. To make a case for the advantages of the kind of knowledge anthropology produces is anything but to invoke what Trouillot refers to as the "ahistorical voice of reason, justice, or civilization" (ibid., 19). It is to acknowledge anthropology's own situated standing as a science among other sciences—to specify what we can do, and can't do, better than economists, political scientists, or psychologists. We have to learn to think about anthropology within a wider landscape of knowledge production and political action. Patting ourselves on the back from our studies of the state, say, is misguided if we fail to contend with changes in the discipline of political science. The other way of reading our ability to claim new ground is in terms of political science's retreat from the historical specificity associated with comparative politics. The motto would seem to be "Let the girls do it"—that is, leave this kind of empirical work to the relatively feminized discipline of anthropology. The boys with their elegant rational-choice models remain nestled in the armpits of power. To become something other than specialists in savagery, we need to find new ways to authorize our findings as something other than the musings of adventurers seeking the exotic close to home. Trouillot calls on anthropology to intervene more effectively in debates over the Western canon by championing minority voices. This challenge remains, but these days there are also other interdisciplinary fish to fry.

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